

Ellen G. White Estate

ELLEN G. WHITE:
THE LONELY YEARS
VOLUME 3
1876-1891

BY ARTHUR L. WHITE

**Ellen G. White: Volume
3—The Lonely Years:
1876-1891**

Arthur L. White

1984

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About the Author

Ellen G. White (1827-1915) is considered the most widely translated American author, her works having been published in more than 160 languages. She wrote more than 100,000 pages on a wide variety of spiritual and practical topics. Guided by the Holy Spirit, she exalted Jesus and pointed to the Scriptures as the basis of one's faith.

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Foreword

A Statement the Author Would Like You to Read

The role of prophets has never been easy. The Master emphasized this one day as He talked with His disciples and the “multitude,” which included many of the religious leaders of the nation. After reviewing the past He looked into the future and declared that persecution, and even death, awaited heaven’s messengers ([Matthew 23:29-35](#)).

Ellen White, like the ancient prophets, faced trials and discouraging circumstances as she tried to accomplish her special mission. This volume of the biography portrays the lonely years in her experience. If she had not had to deliver messages of correction, reproof, or rebuke; if the testimony she was called upon to bear had been all of praise and approbation; if she had been able to lean heavily upon human beings to guide her in fulfilling her call, she would not have experienced the periods of loneliness pictured in these pages.

But earthly instructors or counselors could give only limited guidance to her in her special work. To be true to her mission, much of the time she had to go directly to God for help. In 1902 she wrote, “I have been alone ..., severely alone with all the difficulties and all the trials connected with the work.”—[Selected Messages 3:67](#).

Yet Ellen White was no recluse. She was a friendly, warm-hearted person, much loved and highly esteemed, greatly respected, one whose ministry was much sought after. The experiences that led to the feelings of extreme loneliness were reasonably short-lived, and her outlook usually was optimistic and hopeful.

[10] This volume picks up the Ellen White story at a high point in her ministry—a time when she was writing on the life of Christ and also engaged, with her husband, James, president of the General Conference, in a grueling camp meeting labor that had become a recurring summertime activity. The last years of James White’s life were marked by notable achievements in building the church and its

institutions in spite of periods impaired by illness. His rather sudden death at the age of 60 shocked both Ellen White and the church.

Now midway in her lifework, Mrs. White, though deprived of her husband's companionship and more than ever dependent on divine aid and support, courageously continued her ministry of writing, counseling, and public speaking across America and overseas.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church was growing rapidly and needed an ever-increasing number of ministers and executives to manage its burgeoning conferences and institutional structures. Some of these personnel were new in the doctrine and had limited managerial experience. Ellen White's role as the messenger of the Lord in such circumstances was complicated and involved. This, together with the fact that many members and leaders resisted reproof, correction, and guidance, cast upon her a burden that at times was almost too heavy to bear. This was particularly true as the church passed through the crises related to the General Conference session at Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1888.

It is possible that as you read this volume you may be moved with sympathy for Mrs. White during her lonely years, but it is my hope that you also will be cheered as you note God's guidance and blessings and the favorable response that most church members gave to heaven's messages. Reviewing the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church from 1876 to 1891 is an inspiring experience and strengthens one's confidence that God is guiding His people.

Arthur L. White

[11]

Chapter 1—(1876) A Whirl of Activity

The clouds and cold drizzle that dampened the Bay cities of northern California on New Year's Day, 1876, in no way betokened the spirits of James and Ellen White, who were residing in Oakland. It was the Sabbath and a special day, a day for the edification and building up of the church, a day set apart by the General Conference Committee to be spent in prayer, fasting, and humiliation before God.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church had grown to a membership of just a little more than ten thousand. A well-established publishing house functioned near midcontinent in Battle Creek, Michigan, and another was in its first year of operation in Oakland, California. A medical institution in Battle Creek, which would in a few months have its tenth birthday, was now just getting well supplied with professional personnel. Across the street from it was the Battle Creek College, a year old and enjoying a good patronage. J. N. Andrews was pioneering the work of the church in Europe, pleading for someone to help him, and the prospects were encouraging.

James White, president of the General Conference, was 54 years of age. Having suffered several strokes resulting largely from overwork, he was not well at times. Ellen was 48 and in quite good health, considering her medical history. She was eager to continue her writing, especially on the life of Christ. They owned a home in Oakland adjacent to the newly erected publishing house, on the plot of land purchased for the new publishing venture. This home was now up for sale, for they were building a new one nearby, on Eleventh Street, near Castro. Their family included Willie (who was about to be married and set up his own home), Mary Clough, Lucinda Hall, and May and Addie Walling, two of Mrs. White's nieces for whom they were providing a home. Edson, who was married, lived nearby.

The Whites did not intend that Oakland be the place for their permanent residence, for they must keep close to Battle Creek and its many interests there. Wrote James White:

There our first college, our Health Institute, and our main printing house are located. There is a church of more than two hundred members who regard us as their pastor, though we are from them six months at a time, and are with them only a few Sabbaths in a year. We can never have as much interest at any other point as at Battle Creek.—*The Signs of the Times, November 11, 1875.*

The One-Hundredth Birthday of the Nation

The nation was preparing to celebrate its one-hundredth birthday. What progress had been made during that century! And much of it during the lifetime of James and Ellen White. It was a period matched by none for advancement in knowledge and in the development of a workable democracy.

New inventions followed each other with breathtaking rapidity and ever-broadening scope. Candles and whale-oil lamps had given way to the brighter and more convenient and efficient kerosene lamps, and lights powered by electricity were on the verge of being used. Power looms were taking the place of the spinning wheel and hand looms. The sewing machine lightened the task and shortened the time it took to make clothing. The telegraph now speeded communications, and that wonder, the telephone, would soon obliterate distances. Quill pens gave way to pencils and the fountain pen. The invention of the typewriter gave promise of a revolution in literary work, but for James and Ellen White, this was yet almost a decade away. Photography had developed to the point that from a glass photographic plate multiple prints could be made. The steam engine was employed to propel railroad cars, riverboats, and oceangoing vessels.

Little wonder that the great Centennial Exposition held in Philadelphia in the summer of 1876 was looked upon with awe for

its massive buildings and exhibition of inventions, arts, and wares from all parts of the world.

Ministry in the Bay Area

In January, February, and March, James and Ellen White ministered to the churches in Oakland, numbering eighty members, and San Francisco, with somewhat less.

The San Francisco church had moved ahead in the erection of a house of worship on Laguna Street. O. B. Jones, the very capable builder whom James White had brought from Battle Creek to erect a building for the Pacific Press, was asked to construct the San Francisco house of worship. The outlook was encouraging. J. N. Loughborough, president of the California Conference, wrote in describing the progress in San Francisco:

This church one year since regarded it almost an impossibility to build a house of worship; but the house is now erected, and the basement rented for a sufficient sum to meet all the interest on the money it was necessary to hire to complete the house.—[Ibid., January 6, 1876.](#)

The Publishing Interests

The publishing interests loomed large as the new year opened. The *Signs of the Times* was to be published every week instead of an issue every other week. This called for bold plans to fill its eight almost newspaper-size pages every seven days. In his editorial column in the January 6 issue James White promised, “Our friends may depend upon the *Signs* weekly,” and added:

We commence the series of articles setting forth the reasons of our faith and hope ...with the article ...upon the millennium. These articles will continue in proper order quite through the year. Sketches of the life of Mrs. White will also continue, and will be very important to those who should know the facts in her remarkable experience.

The first article of that issue followed immediately, under the title “Mrs. Ellen G. White, Her Life, Christian Experience, and Labors.” It was written with the general public in mind:

The name of Mrs. Ellen G. White is widely known in consequence of her writings and her public labors as a speaker in nineteen of the States and in the Canadas. Her books in print amount to about four thousand pages which have had an extensive circulation. And her labors as a speaker cover a period of more than thirty years.

[14]

But in the last ten years the providence of God, in harmony with the wishes of the people with whom she has been connected, has moved her out to speak to the crowds at our annual conferences and camp meetings in the several States where they have been held. Newspaper reporters have given sketches of her addresses, and have made statements of their effects upon audiences which have given her prominence in the minds of thousands who have neither read her books nor heard her speak....

In view of the situation, we have for several years felt that it was due the public that the life, Christian experience, and labors of Mrs. White be brought out in a humble volume for circulation as extensively as her name is known.

James White then introduced his plan of letting Ellen White speak for herself by drawing matter from her biographical volume, *Spiritual Gifts*, volume 2, published in 1860. The material was edited and somewhat expanded, particularly as the series continued over a period of many months.

E. G. White Articles

This January 6 issue of the *Signs* also carried an article by Ellen White. It was a reduction of a personal testimony that formed a part of the 208-page pamphlet *Testimony* No. 26, then on the press.

As adapted for the *Signs of the Times* with its non-Adventist readers, however, all reference to the fact that Ellen White was

shown certain things, and all personal references, are left out. The material begins thus:

Sympathy and Love

Many need more human sympathy. This is a quality of our natures which God has given us to render us charitable and kind to those with whom we are brought in contact. June 6, 1876.

[15] The article fills three full columns and is signed “E.G.W.” The testimony from which this material is drawn, almost word for word, with the exception of personal references or applications, fills eleven full pages. The wording of the closing paragraph of the testimony and the *Signs* article are identical.

This procedure was not new. In 1875 the *Signs* carried twenty-nine articles, eight of which were drawn from the *Testimonies*. In 1876 twenty-nine of the forty-one articles were selected from *Testimonies* material then running through the press.

The Pattern of Work in Early 1876

A few diary entries provide a picture of Ellen White’s work through the first four or five months of 1876.

Sabbath, January 8, 1876:

In company with my son Edson and his wife, I crossed the bay to San Francisco. Sabbath school was reorganized. Edson was chosen superintendent, and Brother Chittenden assistant superintendent. I opened the services with prayer and spoke to the people one hour and a half in regard to Christian sympathy and love.... I spoke forenoon and afternoon with great freedom. The Lord blessed the word spoken. About four o’clock I returned to Oakland.

Sunday, January 9, 1876:

I spent most of the day in writing. Felt quite weary and in need of rest from yesterday's labor. In the evening I spoke in Oakland church to an interested audience. A large number of outsiders were present and showed the most respectful attention. I had a good degree of freedom in speaking in regard to the lost sheep—the parable our Saviour gave to His disciples. My husband spoke to a good congregation in San Francisco. He returned at about eleven o'clock.

Monday, January 10, 1876:

I arose at 5:00 A.M. Wrote four pages notepaper to Sister Ings. Sister [Lucinda] Hall and my niece Mary Clough accompanied me in a walk about daylight. We purchased some things to eat. The air was cool and bracing. Read revised pages of *Testimony* No. 26. Wrote several pages of private testimony. After dinner my husband, Miss Clough, and myself walked to town. Purchased two pairs of scissors for Addie and May Walling, and diary for myself.

Tuesday, January 11, 1876: I devoted my time to writing, filling in the broken links in the history of my life. In the afternoon walked to the city. The *Review* came in the evening.—[Manuscript 2, 1876](#).

[16]

Plans for the Summer

James White had in mind to return to the East soon. The November 11, 1875, issue of the *Signs* had carried a note in which he informed the readers:

The condition of our Pacific Association, and to avoid eastern cold winters, make it necessary for us to remain in Oakland until early spring when we shall return, and make timely arrangements for the round of camp meetings for 1876. Mrs. White and the writer think we shall fill up the entire warm part of the season

with meetings, one each week, and that we shall be able with the help of Elders Smith and Canright to attend all the Eastern camp meetings. These are meetings of the greatest importance to our people, and each should be held at the proper time, and should have a full force of laborers.

With the help of Mary Clough, Ellen White was, by early 1876, getting along so well with her writing on the life of Christ that she was beginning to think she should stay by the writing in Oakland through the late winter, spring, and summer, and skip the camp meeting for the coming season.

Counsel for James White—a Symbolic Presentation

The Advent cause in its infancy called for positive direction and surely would have faltered without it and James White was a forceful leader. But as the years passed he was inclined to overemphasize, in his own mind, the importance of his position in relation to the work. The several strokes he suffered and the failure of his associates to be as intense as he in their approach to the work, aggravated the situation. James White became sensitive and touchy, and Ellen tactfully and calmly tried to encourage him to be low-key and take a more rational approach to problems. The Lord, too, had something to say about it. The entry penned in her diary on Thursday, January 6, is enlightening:

[17]

Last night I dreamed of being in a schoolhouse. My husband was teaching. He was standing by one of his pupils who was writing. The teacher would direct, “Put your pen there. Make a heavier stroke here and a finer stroke there.” “There you are, commencing wrong again!” Then, “Put your pen there.”

The copy proved to be a miserable affair. The teacher took up the book and after looking at the copy threw it down impatiently. “That copy is an entire failure, a botch work. I have taken particular pains to tell you just what to do and after all my care this is the work

you have to show. If this is the best you can do you might as well leave school at once.” The young man [the student] was angry and with flushed face arose and left the room.

The young man that I had often seen in my dreams seemed to be by the side of the teacher. He said to the teacher, “You are to a very large degree responsible for that miserable copy; the best of writers would have failed under similar circumstances. If the boy had been left to himself and written without so much dictation, he could have produced a fair copy. He could not follow your directions without being confused and spoiling the copy. That poor boy has had too little encouragement and love, and too much censuring for mistakes that are common to all.

“You make mistakes. You are an erring man. As you wish others to judge you mercifully, do the same to the erring. Give sympathy, give love, and you will find this power will soften and subdue the most wayward and the greatest good will be realized upon your own heart and life. You will feel the subduing influence of the power of that love you exercise and cultivate toward others. You are a teacher. You should represent the great Teacher in your sympathy and tender, pitying love. As you love, you will be loved; as you pity, you will receive the same. ‘With what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again.’ Love is power. It will have a transforming influence, for it is divine.”—[Manuscript 2, 1876](#).

Just how Ellen White may have conveyed the message of counsel and caution is not a matter of record. It was not easy to be the messenger of the Lord, as she wrote years later:

It has been hard for me to give the message that God has given me for those I love, and yet I have not dared to withhold it.... I would not do a work that is so

uncongenial to me if I thought that God would excuse me from it.—[Letter 59, 1895](#).

Testimony No. 26

From time to time, over a period of twenty years there had come from the press messages for the church published in pamphlet form. After the first, which consisted of sixteen pages issued in 1855, they were numbered as published and varied greatly in the amount of pages. [The Signs of the Times, February 10, 1876](#), announced:

Testimony for the Church No. 26 is ready. Orders will be filled as fast as possible.... The book has 208 pages, and is the most important of the kind ever printed.

It was advertised for thirty cents and soon reached out to members in both the East and West. It was from the material of this book that the early 1876 *Signs* articles were drawn.

As the series of articles on Ellen White's life continued, the need was soon felt for more detailed information concerning certain events. Many details had been forgotten. James White, who was handling the details of the biographical series while Ellen White was occupied in writing on the life of Christ, ran the following note on the back page of the February 10 issue of the *Signs*:

In the preparation of Mrs. White's life, her numerous letters will be a fruitful source from which to draw. Her friends are, therefore, urgently invited to forward all letters that remain in their hands. Please address Mrs. E. G. White, Oakland, California, care *Signs of the Times*.

From week to week the paper served as the means of communication between James and Ellen White and the church on the Pacific Coast. Through the back page of the issue of March 3, under the title of "Brief Report," White declared:

Having completed the work for which the committee of the California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

called us to the State, and feeling that duty calls us to the more general interests of the cause, we wish to briefly report what has been done, and the present financial condition of the association. A full report can be given at the time of the annual meeting in April.

[19]

He noted that the Pacific Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association had been incorporated in April, 1875, with Adventists providing capital in stock in the amount of \$15,000. The lot and building had cost \$16,000. Friends in the East had invested \$11,000 to purchase equipment and supplies, and there was a debt on the enterprise of only \$2,000 (*Ibid.*). The plant was located in the city of Oakland, “the pride of California,” and the publishing house was a two-story building with a good basement for storage and a good attic. It was in the form of a Greek cross, sixty-six by twenty-six feet east and west, and forty-six by twenty-six feet north and south. In the rear was a “brick engine house eleven feet from the main building,” in which was housed “the New York Safety Engine,” used to power two fine presses (*Ibid.*, November 11, 1875).

White described Oakland as a rapidly growing city of some twenty-one thousand. He declared:

The climate of Oakland is delightful. The water is good. The people attend to their own business and respect those who in a proper manner mind theirs. Probably there is not a city on the globe where the rights of men are regarded more sacred and where property and human life are safer than in Oakland.—*Ibid.*

His comments on the location of the office in the city, on Castro Street between Eleventh and Twelfth, reveal what was anticipated in the way of working conditions and prospective work:

We are five blocks from the noise of Broadway, in a quiet part of the city. And as we do not covet common printing, our retired position is desirable for our own work and fine book and music printing from the outside, which is already pressing in upon us before we are fully ready for such work.— *Ibid.*

The March 9, 1876, *Signs* carried the information that the board of directors of the Health Reform Institute in Battle Creek had decided to put up a large main building and had invited James White and O. B. Jones to direct the carrying out of these plans.

One week later, after reviewing what had been accomplished in “preaching by steam” in Battle Creek and Oakland, White introduced a challenging proposition:

[20]

Just as the Pacific Press is completely established, the advancing cause in Europe demands that there should be an office of publication in Switzerland.—
[Ibid., March 16, 1876](#)

Still a week later, in the issue of March 23, J. H. Waggoner, working on the Pacific Coast, announced:

An extra session of the General Conference has been appointed to convene March 31. Subjects of great importance are to be considered, which demand that an extra session shall be held.

Brother James White, president of the General Conference, left Oakland yesterday morning, the twenty-second, for Battle Creek, Michigan, to attend this conference. We are happy to say that Brother White left California in good health and with good courage. He has labored very hard here for nearly six months past under circumstances which might have discouraged one of less faith and less consecration to the cause of truth. The work of the publishing house has prospered wonderfully under his careful management.

In a last-page note on March 30, under the heading “Meeting House in Oakland,” Waggoner reported:

By the assistance of Brother White, the Oakland church have secured a building site at a cost of \$4,000, in a desirable situation, and the work of building a house of worship has already commenced. At a meeting of the church on the evening of the twenty-third, Brother

O. B. Jones was requested by a unanimous vote to take charge of the work.

When James White left for Battle Creek, Ellen remained in their Oakland home; she was looking forward to making great strides with the help of Mary Clough, in writing on the life of Christ. Fortunately for the biographer, the distance between husband and wife necessitated much correspondence, rich in the story of day-by-day happenings.

[21] **Chapter 2—(1876) Writing on the Life of Christ**

Probably Ellen White never had such an opportunity to write as she did in April and May of 1876. She had good literary help in Mary Clough, and the two worked together comfortably. The interests of the cause in the East that had called for James White to go to Battle Creek held him there; although Ellen missed James, home life became simple, and she did very little public work. She determined to make the most of this opportunity.

In 1870, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 1, had been published, covering Old Testament history to the reign of Solomon. It was largely a reprint of volumes three and four of *Spiritual Gifts*, with some amplification. It was put out in a neat volume of 414 medium-sized pages. Now she turned her mind to producing a volume similar in size, on Christ's life and work. This would be volume 2. Volume 3, the post-Biblical portion of the controversy story, would carry the reader to the second coming of Christ and the new earth. This was the plan. When the work was finally finished in 1884, there were four volumes—two on the life of Christ.

Early Beginnings on the Life of Christ

[22] Ellen White had been able to write some on Christ's life in the late months of 1872. As fast as materials were prepared they were published in the *Review and Herald*—the first on December 17, titled "The First Advent of Christ." Each of the next five issues carried an article. There was a six-week pause for her to catch up, and then another three articles, closing with April 8, 1873; this carried the story to the death of John the Baptist. Sometimes she had not been able to push ahead with the writing, and sometimes James, who gave her literary help, had been too busy to assist her.

After a break of almost a year, eight articles appeared at irregular intervals between February and October in 1874. Five more, on the temptation of Christ, came out in 1875; the series closed in

mid-April. At this time James and Ellen were dividing their labors between the East and the West. Camp meetings cut heavily into their time and strength, and writing on Christ's life was laid aside. Ellen White felt the need of competent literary help.

A Resumption of the Writing

When they returned to the West in late September, 1875, they had brought Mary Clough with them. Mary was the daughter of Ellen White's older sister Caroline. She was a Christian girl, but not a Seventh-day Adventist. She had had literary training and was soon giving the help Ellen White needed to go forward with her book production. As to her need of such help, Ellen White a little later wrote:

It is a great task for me to arrange my matter to be placed in the hands of the printer without any aid in the matter. If I could do as I have done, write and have a competent copyist prepare my writing for the press, I could do considerable.—[Letter 4d, 1878](#).

At first the tent meetings in San Francisco had led to some breaks in the work as she and her husband were pressed into service; there was also some work in the churches. However her messages were often on some phase of the life of Christ. Aside from what may be deducted from this, there is little information on the phases of the Lord's ministry she was dealing with, until James White's departure for Battle Creek on Wednesday, March 22, 1876, to attend the special session of the General Conference.

After Lucinda Hall returned to Battle Creek, "China John," an Oriental helper, was brought in to assist with the housework. He knew but little English and had much to learn in both household activities and communication. In her note sent off on Friday, two days after James White's departure, she stated:

We are all well as usual. It takes a little time to get settled down from the excitement of your going. You may be assured we miss you. Especially do we feel the loss of your society when we gather about the fireside

evenings. We feel your absence when we sit around the social board. But we shall get more used to this after a while. We have been writing today....

Mary [White, W. C. White's wife] and China John have been cooking today for the Sabbath. It has taken Mary's time almost entirely today. John flies around quick and cheerful.—[Letter 1a, 1876](#).

As already noted, when James and Ellen completed their work in the camp meetings in the fall of 1875, he had declared their intentions to return to the East in the spring to spend the entire warm season in attending camp meetings ([The Signs of the Times, November 11, 1875](#)). Now that she was making good progress in writing on the life of Christ, Ellen White began to feel that she should be excused from the camp meetings and continue with her writing, a conviction that grew from day to day.

On Sabbath, March 25, in her letter to James, she wrote:

Mary Clough and I will do all we can to forward the work of my writings. I cannot see any light shining to Michigan for me. This year I feel that my work is writing. I must be secluded, stay right here, and I must not let inclination or persuasion of others shake my resolution to keep closely to my work until it is done. God will help me if I trust in Him.—[Letter 63, 1876](#).

Late the next week she wrote:

I enjoy the presence of God and yet my soul is continually drawn out for more of His salvation. I am writing and having freedom in my writing. Precious subjects I am handling. The last I completed, or about completed, yesterday—Jesus healing the impotent man at the Pool of Bethesda. It is a great subject, the discourse of Christ following the healing as He was accused of the Jews of Sabbathbreaking.

We miss you both very much. Mary seems lost without Lucinda. Our China John is a treasure. He does

just everything with a nicety that is surprising. Mary has to superintend the cooking. Lucinda had no such help as this to do the drudgery. He works for two dollars per week while trying to learn to cook and talk.—[Letter 1, 1876](#).

[24]

Her letter to James written Tuesday, April 4, was full of significant news. On Monday, the meeting of the stockholders of the Pacific Seventh-day Adventist Association had been held. She did not attend, but she was told that their 21-year-old son, William, had been elected president of the association. What she did not mention was that at the directors' meeting, held that same day, he had been elected also as business manager of the newly established publishing house ([The Signs of the Times, April 13, 1876](#)). She reported in her April 4 letter that they had sixteen at dinner, and "everything passed off pleasantly."—[Letter 3, 1876](#). Although having a lot of company, she tried to stick to her writing and do as much each day as she dared. She soon found she must limit her writing to about half a day.

She arose early Thursday morning to complete this letter. She wrote of the two leading men at the college in Battle Creek and gave James some counsel on dealing with them and the problems there. She added, "I have not conversed with Mary and Willie as to what I have written, but speak of things that I know myself from high authority."—[Ibid.](#) About her writing she declared:

My trust is in God. I have confidence that He will help me in my efforts to get out the truth and light He has given me to [give to] His people. Mary is good help. I appreciate her.—[Ibid.](#)

In her letter written Friday, April 7, she reported on her writing and the visits she and Mary Clough and the two little girls had made to two families. She found a Sister Bohin, of German descent, to be a most devoted believer, with fine taste and an understanding of sacred things. They came away with arms filled with plants for the garden at the new White home. She tells of planting them:

I set out my things in my garden of the new house by moonlight and by the aid of lamplight. The two Marys tried to have me wait till morning, but I would not listen to them. We had a beautiful shower last night. I was glad then I persevered in setting out my plants.—[Letter 4, 1876](#).

[25] Both J. N. Loughborough and J. H. Waggoner were laboring in the area. Ellen White resolved to let them carry the burdens of the churches; she shunned all responsibilities so she could get on with the writing. In this, she told James, “We are all doing well.”

The precious subjects open to my mind well. I trust in God and He helps me to write. I am some twenty-four pages ahead of Mary [Clough]. She does well with my copy. It will take a clear sense of duty to call me from this work to camp meetings. I mean to finish my writings on one book at any rate, before I go anywhere. I see no light in my attending camp meetings. You and I decided this before you left...

I have no will of mine own; I want to do God’s will. At present His will is to tarry in California and make the most of my time in writing. I shall be doing more for the cause in this than in going across the plains to attend camp meetings.—[Ibid.](#)

The next day, April 8, she wrote to Lucinda Hall of her convictions concerning her work:

My husband writes that an appeal is to be sent to me from the conference, but I shall not be moved from that which I believe to be my duty at this time. I have a special work at this time *to write out the things which the Lord has shown me*. We progress finely, but I cannot write more than half a day....

I want time to have my mind calm and composed. I want to have time to meditate and pray while engaged in this work. I do not want to be wearied myself or

be closely connected with our people who will divert my mind. This is a great work, and I feel like crying to God every day for His Spirit to help me to do this work all right.... I must do this work to the acceptance of God.—[Letter 59, 1876](#). (Italics supplied.)

She also told Lucinda that she was getting matter ready for the third “form” thirty-two pages of the *Testimony*, then in the process of production at the Pacific Press. In her letter to James, written the same day, she declared: “I never had such an opportunity to write in my life, and I mean to make the most of it.” In discussing her work, she asks James:

How will it do to read my manuscript to Elders Waggoner and Loughborough? If there is any wording of doctrinal points not so clear as it might be, he (W, I mean) might discern it.”—[Letter 4a, 1876](#).

[26]

A Day of Recreation

In April, she wrote a longer letter than usual to her husband, quite revealing in many features:

I had written you quite a lengthy letter last night, but the ink was spilled upon it, making an unsightly blotch, and I will not send it.

We received your few words last night on a postal card—“Battle Creek, April 11. No letters from you for two days. James White.”

This lengthy letter was written by yourself. Thank you, for we know you are living. No letter from James White previous to this since April 6, 1876. We were very thankful to receive a few lines in reference to yourself from Sister Hall, April 9. I have been anxiously waiting for something to answer.—[Letter 5, 1876](#).

Before closing, she promised, “I will write every morning,” and she asks, “Will you do the same?”

Much of the letter is devoted to a description of the activities of the previous day. It seems that Charles Chittenden, a church member in San Francisco, owned a sizable sailboat, and he had invited a number to join him and his wife in an excursion on San Francisco Bay and the Pacific Ocean. The entire day was spent on the beach and on the water. A steam launch took them out through Golden Gate and to the open Pacific. In the group of passengers were Mary Clough, Edson and Emma White, J. N. Loughborough and his wife, J. H. Waggoner, and a half-dozen others. Mary and Emma were at first seasick, but not Ellen White. She loved every minute of it, and wrote:

The waves ran high, and we were tossed up and down so very grandly. I was highly elevated in my feelings, but had no words to say to anyone.

It was grand—the spray dashing over us, the watchful captain giving his orders, the ready hands to obey. The wind was blowing strong, and I never enjoyed anything so much in my life.—[Ibid.](#)

[27] “I was today to write upon Christ walking on the sea and stilling the tempest,” she told her husband. “Oh, how this scene was impressed upon my mind.” She continued the account of the happenings. She overheard Chittenden say that Sister White looked happy, but he observed that she had nothing to say to anyone. She was filled with awe and buried in her thoughts as she observed the grandeur of the ocean with its high, running waves. The majesty of God and His works occupied her mind. She pondered:

He holds the winds in His hands. He controls the waters. Finite beings, mere specks upon the broad, deep waters of the Pacific, were we in the sight of God, yet angels of heaven were sent from His excellent glory to guard that little sailboat that was careening over the waves. Oh, the wonderful works of God! So much above our comprehension! He, at one glance, beholds the highest heavens and the midst of the sea.—[Ibid.](#)

In her mind she saw the disciples that night on stormy Galilee. She penned two or three pages in vivid description of the tempest, the struggles of the disciples at the oars, and the deliverance as Jesus appeared and stilled the troubled waters. She closed the account with the words "He is our Redeemer. We may trust Him in the storm as well as in the sunshine." Then she added:

Can you wonder that I was silent and happy with these grand themes of contemplation? I am glad I went upon the water. I can write better than before.—[Ibid.](#)

Days of Loneliness

Most of Ellen White's letters to James at Battle Creek were preserved. In the main, they were rather short and carried but few themes: the happenings about the home, her interest in her husband's activities and welfare, and the progress being made in her writing. Frequently she mentioned her affection for James and the loneliness she experienced in his absence.

In her letter penned on Thursday, April 13, she wrote:

We are all quite well and cheerful. We feel every day a most earnest desire for a more sacred nearness to God. This is my prayer, when I lie down, when I awake in the night, and when I arise in the morning, Nearer my God to Thee, nearer to Thee.

[28]

I sleep alone. This seems to be Mary's preference as well as mine. I can have a better opportunity for reflection and prayer. I prize my being all to myself, unless graced with your presence. I want to share my bed only with you. Lucinda is an exception. She seems to be a part of myself as I can make no other one.—[Letter 6, 1876.](#)

On Friday, as the sun was sinking in the west, her thoughts turned to her husband. She wrote:

The Sabbath is drawing on. I will write you a few lines so as not to miss one day. If there is no line from me to you, be assured the fault is not mine.

I have not much news to write. We are well as usual, but when Sabbath comes, it seems quite lonely.—[Letter 7, 1876](#).

Four days later, April 18, her letter carried the word of how much she missed James, and added, “We are so buried up in our writing we have no time ...to be lonesome while thus engaged; but when gathered about the fireside, then there is a great miss.”—[Letter 9, 1876](#).

On Monday evening, April 24, she described the home situation after the day’s work of writing was done.

Mary, Willie, and myself are now seated at the table writing.... We are getting used to being alone so that we do not feel lonesome as we did.... Be of good courage and be just as cheerful and happy as you can. I will do the same.—[Letter 13, 1876](#).

The letters bubble over with her delight in having the opportunity to write on the life of Christ, the subjects she was covering, the fine working relationship with Mary Clough, and with her satisfaction in the finished product.

Ellen White’s Intensity in Writing on Christ’s Life

She had an appointment to speak Sunday evening, April 16, in San Francisco. Her letter to James carried this word:

[29] I have written quite a number of pages today. Mary is hard after me. She gets so enthusiastic over some subjects. She brings in the manuscript after she has copied to read it to me. She showed me today quite a heavy pile of manuscripts she had prepared. Quite proudly she viewed it....

Willie, his Mary, and Mary Clough accompany me to the city tonight. I think that we had better not get any furniture for the new house till you are here to select it.... I do not wish my mind diverted from my work to even go and select furniture....

Well, I cannot write you very much news, when I shut myself in my chamber day after day writing, and then when I write you every day, but you must be content with what you can get. We now take the boat [for San Francisco].—[Letter 8, 1876](#).

Her next letter gives a report on the meeting in the city Sunday night, wherein she took up the subject of “the loaves and the fishes with which Jesus by His miraculous power fed about ten thousand people,” Christ walking on the sea, and the Jews requiring a sign that He was the Son of God. She commented:

All listened with wide-open eyes, and some with open mouths. Mary says she feels provoked that she has written out [in copying and editing the E. G. White text] that subject before she heard me speak upon it. She will now insert some living points she heard that night. She seemed deeply interested.—[Letter 9, 1876](#).

Referring to her writing, she declared:

I see many subjects to write out which must be done with the greatest care. I want this summer, the whole of it, to do this work in. I must stop a day or two in the week and go somewhere or my head will break down. I begrudge every moment that I feel compelled to rest. These intensely interesting subjects weary me far more to write them out than to speak upon them.—[Ibid.](#)

Her mind turned again to the plans for the summer. James had promised months earlier that the two of them would attend the 1876 camp meetings. The brethren in the East were urging that she do this, but James was conceding that perhaps it would be well for her to stay in Oakland and continue her writing.

Her letter to James written Monday, April 24, opens with a word picture of activities in the Oakland home:

Mary has just been reading to me two articles—one on the loaves and fishes, Christ walking on the water

and stating to His hearers He was the Bread of Life, which caused some of His disciples to turn from Him. This takes fifty pages and comprises many subjects. I do think it the most precious matter I have ever written. Mary is just as enthusiastic over it. She thinks it is of the highest value. I am perfectly satisfied with it.

The other article was upon Christ going through the cornfield plucking the ears of corn and healing the withered hand—twelve pages.... These writings are all I can see now. Mary's interest does not decrease at all. She is just as ardent and anxious as I am that this work shall be done now before we leave California.

Interesting subjects are continually opening to my mind. These subjects I speak upon, which fastens them in Mary's mind. I believe that the Lord is with us and His Spirit will impress our hearts.... I believe the Lord will give me health; I have asked Him, and He will answer my prayer. I love the Lord. I love His cause. I love His people. I feel great peace and calmness of mind.

There seems to be nothing to confuse and distract my mind, and with so much hard thinking, my mind could not be perplexed with anything without being overtaxed.

Then in this newsy letter, a little longer than most of her daily epistles to her husband, she gives the home news:

I have not the least care of anything in the house. Mary White is a good general. Shew [the Chinese servant] is first-rate. Shew gets meals now very good, with some oversight.... Everything seems to move off smoothly and well. All the house is well taken care of. I generally choose to take care of my own room, for I dare not have a hand touch my writings or run any risk of having them mislaid....

We are as regular as clockwork. We arise at five. The bell for prayers rings at six. We have prayers be-

fore breakfast. We breakfast quarter after six. There is seldom any variation in our time.—[Letter 13, 1876](#).

Her letter written a few days later, May 5, reveals the plan for two books on the life of Christ. It was now clearly seen that one four-hundred-page volume could tell only about half the story. She wrote: “If I am blessed with health as I have been hitherto, I shall complete my first book in about four weeks.”—[Letter 21, 1876](#).

[31]

Sources for Her Writing on Christ’s Life

The elements that entered into Ellen White’s writing on Christ’s life were (1) the reports of the four Gospel writers, (2) the visions given to her through the years, (3) the writing of reliable commentators, and (4) the illumination of her mind by the Spirit of God as she pressed on with her writing.

In her first writing on Christ’s life in 1858 in *Spiritual Gifts*, volume 1, she frequently intimates the vision source by the use of such expressions as:

“I saw that the Son of God was pale and emaciated.”—Page 31.

“I then viewed Jesus in the garden with His disciples.”—Page 46.

“I saw the Roman guard, as the angelic host passed back to heaven.”—Page 68.

In rewriting the story in 1876, she seldom referred to the visions as a source of her work. In one letter, as noted, she was writing out “the things which the Lord has shown me” ([Letter 59, 1876](#)). In 1889 she stated that “the betrayal, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus” had passed before her point by point ([Letter 14, 1889](#)). It may be assumed that such would apply also to other features of Christ’s life and work. It is also reasonable to assume that what she wrote concerning visions given to her while preparing the manuscript for *The Great Controversy* would also be true of her work on the life of Christ. Of the former she stated: “Many times the scenes about which I was writing were presented to me anew in visions of the

night, so that they were fresh and vivid in my mind.”—[Letter 56, 1911](#).

In 1900 she recalled:

Heavenly scenes were presented to me in the life of Christ, pleasant to contemplate, and again painful scenes which were not always pleasant for Him to bear which pained my heart.—[Manuscript 93, 1900](#).

[32] Mention has been made of her reference to commentaries. These might well be thought of as an aid to her writing, rather than a basic source. She read quite extensively in some of the well-known and well-accepted commentaries, such as William Hanna’s *Life of Our Lord*, Cunningham Geikie’s *Life and Words of Christ*, Daniel March’s *Walks and Homes of Jesus*, and his *Night Scenes in the Bible*. Geikie’s *Hours With the Bible* and Edersheim’s works on the Temple and its services and Jewish social life were known to her, as well as some others.

W. C. White, newly elected president of the Pacific Press, with his wife, Mary, was living in the White home in Oakland as his mother was writing on the life of Christ. On several occasions, at a later time, he spoke of the use she made of such authors and the reasons for so doing:

Notwithstanding all the power that God had given her to present scenes in the lives of Christ and His apostles and His prophets and His reformers in a stronger and more telling way than other historians, ...she always felt most keenly the results of her lack of school education. She admired the language in which other writers had presented to their readers the scenes which God had presented to her in vision, and she found it both a pleasure and a convenience and an economy of time to use their language fully or in part in presenting those things which she knew through revelation, and which she wished to pass on to her readers.—W.C.W. to L. E. Froom, January 8, 1928 ([Selected Messages 3:460](#)).

There may be other reasons as well that are worthy of thoughtful consideration. He mentions several:

The great events occurring in the life of our Lord were presented to her in panoramic scenes, as also were the other portions of the *Great Controversy*. In a few of these scenes, chronology and geography were clearly presented, but in the greater part of the revelation the flashlight scenes, which were exceedingly vivid, and the conversations and the controversies, which she heard and was able to narrate, were not marked geographically or chronologically, and she was left to study the Bible and history and the writings of men who had presented the life of our Lord to get the chronological and geographical connection.

[33]

Another purpose served by the reading of history and the *Life of Our Lord* (Hanna, 1863), and the *Life of St. Paul*, was that in so doing there was brought vividly to her mind scenes presented clearly in vision, but which were, through the lapse of years and her strenuous ministry, dimmed in her memory.—(Ibid., 3:459, 460).

The knowledge that Ellen White read from other authors, and at times employed some of their phraseology, has led some to lose sight of the fact that the many visions given to her by God through the years constituted the main source of her information and insights. Were it not for these visions, she would never have written on the life of Christ. Her reading was primarily an aid in presenting what she had seen.

Tensions Begin to Show

Again and again in the interchange of letters between James and Ellen White in the spring of 1876, while he was involved with the work in Battle Creek and she was engaged in her writing in Oakland, they employed such phrases as “You are happy and ...free in your work” and “I am happy and free in my work.” The refrain

intimates that some tensions were developing. It would seem that these revolved somewhat around the growing tendency on the part of James to feel that he should be privileged to dominate Ellen's work. His keen insight and firm hand in the leadership of the church had saved it many a tragedy, and his strong drive had pushed forward a work that could easily have faltered. But as he advanced in years he was inclined to become demanding and somewhat dictatorial. Through the years Ellen had cherished his counsel, and she much appreciated his assistance in preparing materials for the press. He had been very careful to avoid influencing her or interfering in any way with her special mission. She too had been careful not to be influenced in her work by either friend or foe. She maintained that she must work alone; her messages could be influenced only by God.

[34] On Friday, May 12, replying to a letter from James, she mentioned the fact that her calling upon him to assist her in preparing her writings for print had no doubt annoyed him. She declared:

In regard to my independence, I have had no more than I should have in the matter under the circumstances. I do not receive your views or interpretation of my feelings on this matter. I understand myself much better than you understand me. But so it must be, and I will say no more in reference to the matter. I am glad you are free and happy, and I rejoice that God has blessed me with freedom, with peace, and cheerfulness and courage.... I shall look to God for guidance and shall try to move as He shall lead the way.—[Letter 25, 1876](#).

Although there were some differences of opinion between them at this time, it would be unfair and contrary to the facts to assume that their marriage was endangered. Illness and advancing age accentuated the situation. Nonetheless, the experience, together with the two thousand miles between them, might be said to mark the beginning of "the lonely years."

She was led to write to James four days later:

It grieves me that I have said or written anything to grieve you. Forgive me, and I will be cautious not

to start any subject to annoy and distress you. We are living in a most solemn time and we cannot afford to have in our old age differences to separate our feelings. I may not view all things as you do, but I do not think it would be my place or duty to try to make you see as I see and feel as I feel. Wherein I have done this, I am sorry.

I want an humble heart, a meek and quiet spirit. Wherein my feelings have been permitted to arise in any instance, it was wrong....

I wish that self should be hid in Jesus. I wish self to be crucified. I do not claim infallibility, or even perfection of Christian character. I am not free from mistakes and errors in my life. Had I followed my Saviour more closely, I should not have to mourn so much my unlikeness to His dear image.

Time is short, very short. Life is uncertain. We know not when our probation may close. If we walk humbly before God, He will let us end our labors with joy. No more shall a line be traced by me or expression made in my letters to distress you. Again, I say, forgive me, every word or act that has grieved you.—[Letter 27, 1876.](#)

[35]

The Camp Meetings—E. G. White Would Attend

Notices of the 1876 camp meetings appeared in the *Review and Herald* and *Signs of the Times* and announced that the first would be held in Kansas, May 25 to May 29. Others would follow week by week, most opening on a Thursday. The Minnesota meeting would begin on June 20. The decision to devote two books to the life of Christ meant that the first book could be completed early and then she would be free, for a time, from writing. She wrote to James:

We thought we might get my book written in four weeks, and if it is thought best for us to be at the Minnesota camp meeting, we will be there.—[Letter 26, 1876.](#)

The *Signs of the Times* published four days later announced that because of the press of other writing, sketches of Ellen White's life would be omitted for the present (May 18, 1876).

However, on Sunday, May 21, just one week after suggesting to her husband that she might attend the Minnesota meeting in late June, she and Mary Clough were on the train bound for the East. Specifically, she would be at the Kansas camp meeting, scheduled to open on Thursday, May 25. James White triumphantly placed a last-page note in the *Review* of May 25 that read:

The Camp Meetings

We have received a telegram from Mrs. White stating that her niece, Miss M. L. Clough, and herself would meet us at the Kansas camp meeting the twenty-sixth. We shall probably go the rounds of the camp meetings for 1876, and retire from the northern climate in October, either to the South or to California.

James White.

Whatever work must yet be done on the first volume of the life of Christ would have to be accomplished as they traveled. This volume came from the presses of the *Review* and *Herald* in mid-November, 1876, although the title page carries the year date of 1877.

Chapter 3—(1876) The Camp Meetings

[36]

James White was overjoyed to receive Ellen's telegram that she, with Mary Clough, would meet him at the Melvern, Kansas, camp meeting, which was due to open on Thursday, May 25. He hastened off twenty postcards to as many points in Kansas, giving the welcome word. He had summoned J. H. Waggoner to come from California to assist him, for he felt the need of help through the camp meeting season. This he now canceled, for Ellen would be taking many of the meetings.

He assured Willie and Mary, in Oakland, that he would be on the grounds with ample preparations made, and he was, but Ellen White's train was delayed; instead of arriving on Friday, she was driven onto the grounds early Sabbath morning. She was weary after six days of travel, including a twenty-mile trip by farm wagon over bad roads, a journey broken by a stop for the night at the home of a friend.

"Weary, of course," reported James White, "short of sleep, and trembling with nervous headache, she takes the speaker's stand at half past ten and is wonderfully sustained in her effort."—[The Signs of the Times, June 8, 1876](#). She was the speaker that evening also to a congregation increasing in numbers. James White described the encampment, first as things looked on Friday, before Mrs. White and Mary arrived:

The weather is fine, the grove pleasant, and besides the two large tents, one seated for the congregation, and the other parted with cloth for families, there are on the ground seventeen family tents, besides several covered wagons used for lodgings....

[37]

By the assistance of many with cheerful hearts and ready hands, our tent is pitched, board floor is laid, and the tent is furnished with chairs, table, beds, bedding, et

cetera, ready to receive Mrs. White and her niece from California and other expected friends.—[Ibid.](#)

Continuing his report, he wrote of Sunday:

It is our turn to speak. The audience is large and attentive. Mrs. White speaks in the afternoon, and calls forty or more forward for prayers. This is an excellent move. We often lose ground on First-day before the crowd for want of moral courage to keep at our work for the advancement of the church and the conversion of sinners. But at this meeting decided advancement is made on First-day.

Before the evening discourse we hold a meeting for the special benefit of those who are seeking the Lord. Near fifty come forward. The interest of this social meeting increases until the last. Many speak for the first time.—[Ibid.](#)

Monday was a full day and concluded with a meeting of which he wrote:

In the evening, Mrs. White speaks with great power upon progressive sanctification as expressed by the apostle, on the plan of perpetual addition, until an abundant entrance is given into the immortal kingdom. [2 Peter 1:5-11](#). At the close of the meeting eight or ten rise up as candidates for baptism.

Third-day morning. The camp has arisen at four, and we are enjoying a precious social parting meeting. This moment Mrs. White is making closing remarks, exhorting the brethren and sisters to watch lest they lose Jesus by the way in returning home, as Joseph and Mary lost Christ in returning from Jerusalem.—[Ibid.](#)

Ellen White, writing from the campground, declared, “Children, I believe it was my duty to attend this meeting. I am coming out all right as far as health is concerned if I rest and do not labor too hard.”—[Letter 30, 1876](#). She spoke of her pleasure at the healthy

condition of the conference, which promised to become one of strength. She told of how “several young men came to this meeting unconverted and careless, sought the Lord earnestly, and took the baptismal vows.”—*Ibid.* As James and Ellen departed for the railroad depot they observed the train of wagons on their way to the water for the second baptism over the weekend, bringing the number to thirty-eight in all. [38]

As he brought his report of this, the first camp meeting of the season, to a close, James White made this enlightening comment:

This excellent meeting, with all its labor of preparation, anxiety, preaching, hearing, exhorting, confession of sins and want of Christ, its tears, deliverances, and joys, is now past. Those parents who brought their children to the meeting and saw them converted, and take the baptismal vow, are now glad that they brought them. Those who did not bring their children regretted their mistake. These annual feasts of tabernacles are gatherings of the greatest importance; and there should be a general turnout of all who may be benefited.—*The Signs of the Times, June 8, 1876.*

At the special session of the General Conference that had been held in late March, James White had participated in laying plans that called for one meeting to follow another, week by week, usually with a parting meeting Tuesday morning. The first was now in the past; as listed in the *Review and Herald of May 25* and *July 13* there were thirteen more yet to attend: Missouri, Iowa, two in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Ohio, Vermont, Massachusetts, Maine, New York, Indiana, Michigan (including the General Conference session), and Illinois.

En route to the Missouri camp meeting at Holden, they had a few hours to visit Ellen’s sister Caroline Clough, as well as her nieces. They arrived at the campground in ample time for the opening of the meeting on Thursday. In describing the surroundings, she stated:

It is a beautiful picture of loveliness that is presented to the eye, in the trees covered with green foliage, the

waving grain with the sunlight and shadows resting upon it, the cultivated soil, the varied scenery in the high hills covered with verdure and adorned with trees, and the broad, rich valleys under cultivation. All is fresh and green.—[Letter 31, 1876](#).

[39] Knowing that it seldom rained in California in summer, she commented, “I suppose you are drying up in Oakland and looking burned and seared. But Oakland is the home of my choice.”

The *Kansas City Times* carried a good report of the meeting, which was held in a beautiful grove. There were seventeen family tents and a large congregation tent. The paper stated:

The plan of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is to hold great annual camp meetings in most of the States. These are attended by their prominent ministers. Elder White and wife are here and are expected to make the tour of the United States. They open the summer’s campaign with the Kansas and Missouri meetings. They are both indefatigable workers, preaching once or twice a day, and also writing editorials and reports for their church papers, published at Battle Creek, Michigan, and Oakland, California.—In [The Signs of the Times, June 15, 1876](#).

Ellen White reported fifteen hundred people attending her Sunday meetings, morning and evening ([Letter 31, 1876](#)). James White regretted that this and the Kansas meetings were held at points distant from the railroad. If properly located, he felt, they could well have been attended by “five or ten thousand” (RH, June 15). He commended the conference for electing laymen for the conference committee.

James and Ellen White were not enthusiastic about camp meetings held at an inconvenient distance from the railway stations. Of their experience in getting off to Iowa, she wrote to their children in Oakland:

Yesterday we arose early and rode three miles over rough road to see the train move grandly out of the

depot, leaving us behind. We then went to Brother O'Brien's and waited till the next morning.—[Letter 31a, 1876](#).

The remedy proposed by James White was that the meetings be properly located the next year. The next meeting was in Iowa, just outside the city limits of Marshalltown. Uriah Smith reported that “Brother and Sister White arrived from the Missouri meeting on Thursday P.M. bringing a good report from that meeting and being themselves in good health and spirits.”—[The Review and Herald, June 15, 1876](#). There were forty family tents and two large tents. [40] Friday morning, June 9, James White wrote Willie:

We are well, and having fine weather, and a crowd of brethren, a quarter larger than ever before—1,200 out last evening to hear me speak.

A week later he wrote:

Mary [Clough] is splendid on reports. The Iowa camp meeting was a great victory. We sent reports to eight different papers in the State.—James White to WCW, June 16, 1876.

Smith was at the next meeting also, held at Sparta, Wisconsin. Note his interesting report:

Here, as in Iowa, the presence of Brother and Sister White constituted, in a large measure, the life of the meeting, their counsel and labors giving tone to the exercises and progress of the work. Sister White, especially, was at times called out in powerful appeals, and most forcible descriptions of scenes in the life of Christ from which lessons can be drawn applicable to everyday Christian experience. These were of absorbing interest to all the congregation.

These servants of the church, though now of so long and large experience, and notwithstanding all their wearing labors, are still growing in mental and spiritual strength.—[Ibid., June 29, 1876](#)

Effective Use of the Public Press

At Ripon, the second camp meeting to be held in Wisconsin that year, inclement weather kept the weekend crowds at home, but many were reached through the public press. Ripon, said to be “quite a wealthy and aristocratic place” of some four thousand residents, was at first not too friendly toward the idea of an Adventist camp meeting being held there, but their attitudes changed as they read the *Ripon Free Press*. That paper, normally a weekly, ran a daily during the meeting. Smith reported that the space in these daily issues was devoted largely “to an account of the meeting as it progressed, and to a publication of those leading points of our faith which would best give the people an idea of what position we as a church, maintain.” [41] Of the reporting he noted:

Miss M. L. Clough, a niece of Sister White’s who is traveling with them as reporter, furnished full and graphic accounts of each day’s meetings for the *Free Press*, with a synopsis of all the sermons delivered. Besides these accounts, there were published in this series of dailies the fundamental principles of our faith, the sketch of the rise and progress of Seventh-day Adventists, “Which Day Do You Keep and Why?” and “Forty Questions on Immortality.”

And right here we take occasion to mention what we have not before referred to, that is, the reports of these western camp meetings that have been furnished to the dailies of the different States. Miss Clough, with indefatigable industry, with great versatility of thought and felicity of expression, has given a full daily report of every meeting, stating all particulars, suffering no point of interest to pass unnoticed, but grasping all the salient features of the occasion, and producing the whole in a style pleasing to the popular reader, while it gave a very accurate representation of the meeting.

In Iowa eight daily papers were furnished with these daily reports. At the Sparta meeting three dailies of Wisconsin and the *Chicago Times* were thus furnished.

At the Minnesota meeting, one daily and several weeklies. And at the present meeting, three leading dailies of Wisconsin, besides the *Free Press* of this place already mentioned. These reports, we learn, have been and are being quite extensively copied into other papers, and thus are Seventh-day Adventists and their work brought before the people as they never have been before.—[Ibid.](#), [July 13, 1876](#)

When we consider that all this was done without typewriters or carbon paper, the proportions of such a task of reporting loom large.

One man at the Ripon meeting testified that he had come on foot sixty miles to attend the meeting; another walked seventy miles to do so.

In a letter Ellen White wrote to her children, she reported that James was so “fearfully worn” that she took the principal burden through the meeting ([Letter 34, 1876](#)).

A Breathing Spell Between Camp Meetings

[42]

With this the sixth camp meeting coming to a close on Tuesday morning, July 4, James and Ellen White had a breathing spell until August 10, when the Ohio meeting would open. They hastened back to Battle Creek, hoping to get some rest and pick up several lines of work. She wrote to Willie and Mary, eager to report and hungry for news:

**Battle Creek,
July 17, 1876.**

Dear children,

We arrived here the evening of the fourth.... We were just in time to witness the procession of the birds of paradise. The leader was represented as an Indian warrior; then followed the continentals—the signers of the Declaration of Independence dressed as they dressed, powdered hair, short breeches, and leggings. Some things were really interesting and some ridiculous, but I cannot write. I have kept on the strain so long I am

now finding my level and I am not very intelligent. We cannot, Father, Mary, or myself, do anything now. We are debilitated and run down like an old clock.—[Letter 33, 1876](#).

After getting some rest, Ellen White picked up her work of writing on the life of Christ. Financial times were hard, and James labored diligently to secure means with which to carry on the various interests—the school, the publishing house, and evangelistic campaigns. He also saw the new church hymnal, *Hymns and Tunes*, through the press, and oversaw the designing of charts for evangelists to use.

In a day or two they left for New York State and then on to Philadelphia. They had hoped to get some articles off to the *Signs*, but were just too worn. Yet she could write:

We never have attended a round of camp meetings with such satisfaction as these last thus far.—[Letter 34, 1876](#).

The Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia

[43] Friday morning, July 28, they arrived at Philadelphia where they were met by John Kellogg, who was just completing his medical training. A horse car took them to a depot where they caught a train for the twenty-six-mile trip to Wilmington, Delaware. Here at a boarding house, John had rented a large, pleasant, well-furnished room for them. Mary Clough had a “cozy little room” just above. They felt fortunate to find such a pleasant place to stay.

On Sabbath they found a beautiful grove on a hill overlooking Wilmington. There with Dr. Kellogg and Will Fairfield, they rested and conversed on religious subjects including the life of Christ and health reform. Ellen White wrote to Edson and Emma:

John takes a very sensible view of health reform. I find him in a very good, healthful state of mind on these subjects upon which we have conversed. We see the need of more earnest, active effort in reference to the great subjects of health reform. Our Health Institute is

sinking for the want of proper physicians and proper workers, interested workers.

We have sought to make Dr. Kellogg feel it is his duty to go into the institute, and take hold with Willie Fairfield and Brother Sprague and with zeal and interest bring up the institute. We have taken our luncheon on the green grass, and now conversation again. Important matters are to be considered and decisions made.—[Letter 35, 1876](#).

Now our business is to visit Centennial grounds every day, see what we can, and [let] Mary make reports. We shall take our dinner with us from our landlady.—[Ibid.](#)

The *Review and Herald* reported on August 10 that “Elder White is spending a couple of weeks in Philadelphia, and is improving the present opportunity to publish second editions of the engraving, entitled ‘Way of Life,’ and of the Lecturer’s Charts [both prophetic and Ten Commandments]. With efficient helpers he has greatly improved them, and will have them ready for the Michigan camp meeting and General Conference in September.”

The Centennial Exhibition, James White felt, was magnificent in its greatness, gorgeousness, and perfection, such as the newspapers could not tell it ([Ibid.](#)). By courtesy of the publishing association, Seventh-day Adventists had an exhibit there showing denominational books and health works. This was located in the main building in the American Book Trade Department ([The Review and Herald, August 17, 1876](#)).

Camp Meetings Again

[44]

The program for the Eastern camp meetings was much the same as the six already finished. The reports gave little glimpses of joyous and sometimes awkward situations, and of course, of triumph as God blessed in the work. The late-summer meetings opened in Ohio at Norwalk. James White’s older brother John, a Methodist minister, resided in Ohio, and they managed to get in a little visit en route.

On Sunday the morning was cold and rainy, but before noon the clouds had dispersed, and fair weather smiled upon the encampment. In the afternoon, by actual count, 551 teams came through the gate of the campground, averaging four persons to each team. These, with the Sabbathkeepers upon the ground, made a congregation of 2,500 to whom Brother White spoke with great liberty on the reasons of our faith and hope.—[Ibid., August 1, 1876](#)

Ellen White gave one evening discourse, but she was confined much of the time to their tent, and for two days to her bed. “Your father and mother are worked down,” she wrote to Willie.

We work hard. Your father does the work of three men at all these meetings. I never saw a man work so energetically, so constantly, as your father. God does give him more than mortal energy. If there is any place that is hard, your father takes it. We pray God that we may have strength to do the work necessary to be done in these special occasions.—[Letter 39, 1876](#).

The thought of advancing age and waning strength appalled both of them. “We see a very great work to be done in the world and we cannot endure the thought of failing in physical strength now,” wrote Ellen White in another letter to their children in the West. She continued:

I look all over the field and I see none who could fill your father’s place. His head to plan and his life of experience to balance the inexperienced is very essential. God has a work for us to do and we need the help, the encouragement, and confidence of our people to do this work.—[Letter 41, 1876](#).

[45]

The Groveland Camp Meeting

For attendance, the camp meeting held at Groveland, Massachusetts, reached an all-time high. It opened Thursday, August 24,

and ran for five days. The grounds, near Haverhill, some thirty miles north of Boston, were easily reached by train and river excursion boats from both Boston and Haverhill. There were fifty-five tents, including the three pavilions—forty-five, fifty-five, and sixty-five feet in diameter—pitched in the beautiful grove. The weather was so fine the meetings were held under the trees and the three large tents used for sleeping quarters. The women occupied one and men the other two. Five hundred camped on the grounds. The “auditorium” swept up in a natural amphitheater from the speakers’ stand, the well-cleared grove affording delightful shade.

River steamers ran twice a day from Haverhill, four miles away, and every hour on Sunday. Eighteen trains ran each day, all stopping at the campground. The Sabbath meetings were well attended, but Sunday brought its surprises. Mary Clough reported:

Sunday was a lively day on the campground. Special trains were run from the cities of Lawrence, Newburyport, Haverhill, et cetera, and at 9:00 A.M. the auditorium was filled with intelligent people to whom Elder White preached about one hour.

Still the people poured in from the towns about, and the trains came loaded with their living freight. After an intermission of thirty minutes, Mrs. White ascended the platform, amid the profound stillness of that vast multitude, and addressed the people on the subject of Christian temperance. Her original and comprehensive manner of handling this subject elicited the highest commendation of all that heard.

The morning trains were crowded, but the noon trains flooded the grove, and the two-thirty train from Lawrence brought fifteen cars literally packed with people, the platform and steps were full also, and the conductor was obliged to take the roof in order to signal the engineer. He reported that it would have taken twenty-five cars to bring all the people who were waiting at the depot to take passage for the campground.—[The Signs of the Times, September 14, 1876.](#)

[46] Of the experience Ellen White wrote:

What a scene is before me! It is estimated that twenty thousand people are assembled in this grove. The third train, of fifteen cars, has just arrived. Every seat was filled and every foot of standing room, also the platform and the steps. A sea of human heads is already before me, and still the cars are to come. This is to me the most solemn sight I ever beheld. Hundreds in carriages are driving away because they cannot get within sound of the speaker's voice.—*Ibid.*

All standing room throughout the entire enclosure was taken, and some, like Zacchaeus, climbed trees to get sight of the speaker. The vast throng gave good attention; Ellen White, speaking slowly with a low, well-supported voice, made them hear. Many took trains home for the noonday meal, others swarmed down on the foodstand "like an army of grasshoppers on a Kansas cornfield," and according to the "reporter," "made quite as clean work." Many had brought their lunch baskets. They were the fortunate ones.

Temperance Meeting in Haverhill

No sooner was Ellen White finished with her afternoon discourse than the officers of the Temperance Reform Club of Haverhill approached her, inviting her to speak the next evening in an auditorium in the city; they promised an audience of one thousand. Although weary, she consented to fill the appointment. She reported that leading men from the city were on the platform. She wrote:

The Queen of England could not have been more honored.... One thousand people were before me of the finest and most select of the city.

I was stopped several times with clapping of hands and stomping of feet. I never had a more signal victory....

Never did I witness such enthusiasm as these noble men leading out in temperance reform manifested over my talk upon temperance. It was new to them. I spoke

of Christ's fast in the wilderness and its object. I spoke against tobacco. I was besieged after the meeting and commended, and I was urged, if I came to Haverhill, to speak to them again.—[Letter 42, 1876](#).

A Banner Camp Meeting Year

[47]

As D. M. Canright reported in the Signs of the accomplishments of the Illinois camp meeting, the last of the season in the East, he gave particular attention to the work of Mary Clough as a press secretary. He noted the results of her labors in introducing the denomination to the general public through her reports of the work of the church furnished to the public press. He observed:

Our indispensable reporter, Miss Mary Clough, was also on hand with her genial good nature and ready pen, keeping a half-dozen copyists busy sending the reports each one copied by hand of our meetings to papers in all parts of the State. If anyone in the Northern States doesn't know who Seventh-day Adventists are by this time, it is not because the papers haven't done their duty in the case! So closes another camp meeting season, by far the best we have ever had.—[The Signs of the Times, October 19, 1876](#).

The issue of the *Review and Herald* of the same date carried James White's appraisal of this new method of outreach.

Our camp meeting reporter, Miss Mary L. Clough—Mrs. White's niece, much respected and beloved by our people, not only for her ability as a writer, but for all those qualities and accomplishments which make her a refined lady—has done a work with her pen which but few of our people comprehend.—[The Review and Herald, October 19, 1876](#).

When the camp meetings were over and the Whites and Mary Clough returned on Wednesday, October 4, to Battle Creek, they were utterly worn and exhausted. They had succeeded, but for it

they paid a price—the price mortal man pays for overwork, a price paid gladly to see the cause of God prosper.

Chapter 4—(1876-1877) A Winter of Writing and Publishing

[48]

The fourteen 1876 camp meetings over, in early October James and Ellen White returned to Battle Creek, staying at the home of William and Jenny Ings. Mary helped in getting out the volume on the life of Christ, *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 2. As they rallied from the incessant camp meeting labor, they began to plan for the return to the Pacific Coast, but first they had the job of hastening the book through the press.

Ellen White's October 19 letter to William and Mary in Oakland was devoted largely to plans for writing and publishing. C.W. Stone, newly elected managing editor of the *Review and Herald*, reported:

Sister White is keeping all hands busy with her pen, and Brother White is hard at work several hours each day in arranging the manuscript [for *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 2] for publication in a book, and at the same time selecting portions of it to be printed in several pamphlets [Redemption series]. The presses are kept busy. Everybody here has enough to do, and God blesses in doing His work. He sustains His servants in their arduous labors wonderfully.—[Ibid., November 9, 1876](#)

Writing from Battle Creek on October 26, Ellen declared:

We are in the very worst drive and hurry getting off my volume two, *Spirit of Prophecy*. Three new forms are already printed. If we remain here four weeks longer we shall have the book completed, and removed from my mind great burden of care....

These few weeks will tell if we can make it. I fear if we left immediately the book would be hindered for two months.—[Letter 46, 1876](#).

[49]

The *Review* for November 9 carried the announcement of the book:

The second volume of the *Spirit of Prophecy*, by Mrs. E. G. White, will be ready in a few days. This work is a thrilling description of the first advent, life, teachings, and miracles of Christ, and will be regarded by the friends of Mrs. White as a book of almost priceless value.... Price, postage paid, \$1.00. J. W.

Uriah Smith was unstinted in his words of appreciation and commendation of the volume on the life of Christ:

We are prepared to speak of this volume, now just issued, as the most remarkable volume that has ever been issued from this office. It covers that portion of the great controversy between Christ and Satan which is included in the life and mission, teachings and miracles, of Christ here upon the earth. Many have endeavored to write the life of Christ; but their works, as compared with this, seem to be only like the outer garments to the body. Here we have, so to speak, an interior view of the wonderful work of God during this time.

And if the reader has a heart that can be impressed, feelings that can be stirred, an imagination that can respond to the most vivid portraiture of the most thrilling scenes, and a spirit to drink in lessons of purity, faith, and love from Christ's divine example, he will find in this volume that which will call into liveliest play all these faculties. But the best of all is the lasting impression it must make for good upon all who read.—

[The Review and Herald, November 30, 1876.](#)

On November 16 the Whites and Mary Clough took the “fast train” for California. The Battle Creek they left was very dear to the hearts of James and Ellen White, and that affection was mutual. Feelingly, he wrote of his farewell just before taking the train for the West:

Twenty-one years since the Review and Herald was moved from Rochester, New York, to Battle Creek, Michigan. Here we have battled for truth, and the manifestation of true and undefiled religion among our people, for more than a score of years. Here we have witnessed the growth of our publishing work with deepest interest. Here we have seen the establishment of our Health Institute and the planting of our first college. We are happy to record that prosperity attends all these institutions.

[50]

At Battle Creek there is a large membership with whom we have during the past seven months enjoyed the happiest days of the past twenty-one years. We have never enjoyed so great freedom in preaching the Word to this people or to any other, as to the Battle Creek church since our return from California last April. This church has had trials, and has made mistakes. But having acknowledged those wrongs, and having entered into a most solemn covenant to stand unitedly for the right, the blessing of God has been returning, and last Sabbath morning was the best and happiest service we have ever enjoyed with this people.—*Ibid.*, November 9, 1876

He reminisced of success and disappointments, and reminded his readers that he and his wife were growing old and never again could undertake to make a round of the camp meetings as they had just completed. He mentioned plans to refrain from such labor and spend a year on the Pacific Coast.

In her letter to her children in Oakland, Ellen White expressed herself in regard to the beloved Battle Creek they were about to leave:

I tell you, Will, we ...ought to be here all the time. This is the great heart of the work, and if the body here is healthy, a healthful current will be diffused through the entire body. Your father's and my influence is needed here more than in any other place. We are appreciated

here. We can do more good when we are appreciated than when we are not.

We [have] never had greater influence among our people than at the present time. They all look up to us as father and mother. There is nothing that they would not do for us to help us if they could. We hate to tear away, but we must.—[Letter 46, 1876](#).

[51] C. W. Stone, in his *Review* editorial titled “Westward,” wrote touchingly of the departure of the Whites and several who were accompanying them to work at the Pacific Press:

At 1:17 P.M. we heard the rumbling of the wheels, and filling the windows in the south end of the three office buildings, where we could watch the departing train, our corps of helpers waved their handkerchiefs with many a good wish for the dear friends and servants of God who were rapidly being borne from our sight.

Our prayers go with them. May they safely arrive in Oakland, where a welcome greeting has long been awaiting them; and from that sunny coast may the servants of God be able to send out words of warning, reproof, and good cheer to all parts of the wide harvest field, until in the providence of God it shall seem good to them again to visit us.—[The Review and Herald, November 23, 1876](#).

The Work for the Winter

To James White, the return to California meant picking up his work as editor of the *Signs of the Times*. He would be assisted by his daughter-in-law, Mary Kelsey White, who at the age of 20 was serving as managing editor and would soon have her name on the masthead as such. It was to return to the newly established publishing house efficiently managed by his son William, now 22, reaching out for the aid of experience in the publishing business. It was to encourage George Manual, foreman of the plant, who had taken charge at the age of 21, “being master before he was

apprentice,” as James White put it, but who “called books and genius to his aid,” and was gaining a reputation for the excellence of his work” ([The Signs of the Times, December 14, 1876](#)). “Thank God for children,” expostulated James White, as he reflected on the words of a “tramp” printer who, visiting the plant, commented that the work was conducted by children.

To Ellen White, to return to California, was, in part, to return to their Oakland home and their two married sons in the West, but mainly to pick up the work of writing on the later events in the life of Christ for volume three of the *Spirit of Prophecy*, and for the *Signs*. Regarding the latter, James White explained:

Mrs. White designs to furnish matter for each number of the *Signs* which will deeply interest all our readers. Her expositions of Scripture truths, practical appeals, and her life sketches will add great importance to this volume of our paper.—[The Review and Herald, December 28, 1876](#).

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Added to this was the selecting of suitable reading for children and youth. This feature of work can be traced back a full year to December, 1875, when the Pacific Press published twenty little booklets of children’s stories.

Children’s Stories Selected by Ellen White

Some twenty years before this, when the children of James and Ellen White were growing up, and before Seventh-day Adventists had either schools or appropriate reading matter for youth, except the eight-page monthly *Youth’s Instructor*, Ellen White began to select, largely from religious magazines, stories with moral lessons that would help to furnish appropriate reading for the Sabbath in their home.

At this period of time there was an exchange of journals between publishers. The Review and Herald furnished its journals, the *Review*, the *Health Reformer*, and the *Youth’s Instructor*, to non-Adventist publishers in return for the journals they put out. It was a common practice, and the magazines so received were referred to

as “exchanges.” These journals came to Uriah Smith’s desk. After he had looked them over and selected what he wanted from them, he passed them to Ellen White. She, in turn, watching for helpful materials, especially to read to her family, clipped out choice articles and pasted them in scrapbooks—large-sized volumes made up by binding the issues of some journals together for this specific purpose, or constructed from heavy new stock. These grew in number until there were some twelve or fifteen, which she referred to as her scrapbooks. They are now in the White Estate vault.

[53] As time went on, Ellen White and others observing the value of these materials began to think in terms of some booklets for children. Well along in the year 1875 she led out in selecting materials for twenty little books of sixteen pages each, to be put out in neat, colored covers. James White, advertising them in the *Signs* of December 23, 1875, described their origin. This is one of the few places Ellen White was linked, by name, with this enterprise:

We have for sale at this office a series of little books for children suited to the ages of from 5 to 12 years. Mrs. White has been gathering blessed little stories for the past twenty years, and pasting them in her scrapbooks. This little series of books is a careful selection from a great amount of excellent reading matter for children, and will be universally acknowledged by all who become acquainted with them to be the best in print.

These were priced at 2 cents each or 40 cents for the full series of twenty. The same material was put up in ten books of thirty-two pages each with “highly colored, glazed covers,” which could be had for 50 cents postpaid, for the set of ten. Although the pamphlets were small and inexpensive, James White thought big in terms of their distribution. He continued:

We know that our friends have ten thousand little sons and daughters, nephews and nieces, and other little folks who are very dear to them to whom they wish to present these precious little books. So we print enough for all.

Seventh-day Adventist parents and others welcomed heartily this new line of literature. Beginning in the early months of 1876 and continuing for several years, the *Signs* carried a department titled “The Home Circle.” Not a few stories selected from Ellen White’s scrapbooks were here republished. Many holes cut into the pages of these scrapbooks testify to the use made of these materials as items were clipped out to make up copy for the journal. Looking through these scrapbooks today, one finds at the head of a number of the clippings, in Ellen White’s handwriting, the words penciled, “Child’s Book,” “Sunshine Series,” “Second Series,” et cetera.

Just before leaving Battle Creek for the West, Ellen White, in writing on October 26 to Willie and Mary, mentioned them:

While we are seeking to get off my books, Sister Ings is devoting every evening to my scrapbooks. I have one about completed and several smaller-sized ones half done. We are getting together all the best pieces from exchanges for you to use—mothers’ pieces for books, children’s pieces for small books, youths’ pieces for Sabbath reading. We are working to help you [Mary, in editing the *Signs*] in your work in every way we can.—[Letter 46, 1876](#).

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Soon plans emerged to issue four bound books of about four hundred pages each, composed of such materials; they were called *Sabbath Readings for the Home Circle*. As the fourth volume was on the press in 1881, James White told the story of this line of work:

In our early labors in the cause, both Mrs. White and the writer have felt a deep solicitude for the precious youth. Thirty long years since, when in comparative youth, before its present managers were born, we published the first number of the *Youth’s Instructor*, containing the first Sabbath school lesson learned by the children of Seventh-day Adventists.

Mrs. White has ever been a great reader, and in our extensive travels she has gathered juvenile books and papers in great quantities, from which she selected moral

and religious lessons to read to her own dear children. This work commenced about thirty years since.

We purchased every series of books for children and youth, printed in America and in Europe in the English language, which came to our notice, and bought, borrowed, and begged miscellaneous books of this class, almost without number. And when we established the Pacific Press at Oakland, California, in 1875, we shipped more than half a ton of these books and papers to that office at great expense.

And there we published the Sunshine Series of little books for the little ones, from 5 to 10 years old, the series of Golden Grains, for children from 10 to 15 years, and the volumes for the *Sabbath Readings for the Home Circle* for still more advanced readers. Our object in publishing in Oakland, California, instead of Battle Creek, Michigan, was to help the California office in its infancy....

We published ten thousand copies of the Sunshine Series, and ten thousand of the Golden Grains at Oakland, making in all 240,000 little books. And we have published six thousand copies of each of the four volumes of the *Home Circle*, making in all twenty-four thousand bound books....

[55]

Precious books! The compilers have spent years in reading and rejecting ninety-nine parts, and accepting one. Precious books, indeed, for the precious youth.—
[The Review and Herald, June 21, 1881.](#)

The development of these materials, largely for the reading of children and youth, but in some cases the parents, provides a glimpse of Ellen White in a role she did not often fill. She selected materials for publication, materials for which she made no claim beyond that of a compiler. In this work she provided most useful reading matter for Adventist homes. The pamphlets and little bound books were advertised from time to time in the *Signs of the Times* and the *Review*

and *Herald*, the bound books selling for 75 cents each, or four for \$3.

Plans for the Signs for 1877

As plans were being formulated in late 1876 for the next volume of the *Signs*, James White wrote an editorial introducing the “new volume.” He explained its various special features, penning these lines describing his intentions in regard to one department in the paper:

The “Home Circle” will be a department of great importance to every family. Here will be found lessons of self-control, mutual forbearance and love, respect for parents, the power of kindness toward children, and the great moral and religious lessons of life, which should bless every household. These articles for the family circle, embracing parents as well as children, are not hastily snatched from our exchanges for this year. They have been selected by the watchful, critical eye of a mother, during the twenty years she has been leading her own children to manhood, and by her hand pasted in huge scrapbooks from which they are now taken.—[The Signs of the Times, December 28, 1876.](#)

The issues of the *Signs* from week to week in the months of 1877 testify to Ellen White’s faithful work in literary lines, but not altogether as projected by her husband. On an average, a little more than three out of four issues of the paper carried articles from her pen, primarily materials drawn from her writing on the life of Christ, which was a continuing work with her through much of 1877. With few exceptions each issue carried the “Home Circle,” with materials selected by Ellen White. The promised articles continuing the story of Ellen White’s life did not get prepared, hence did not appear.

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James and Ellen White found themselves more worn than they had at first thought, and they were not able to get on with their literary work as rapidly as they had planned. They worked away in Oakland, traveling little and speaking rarely. They did attend the

California State Quarterly Meeting in Oakland, Sabbath and Sunday, January 6 and 7. J. N. Loughborough, president of the California Conference, reported:

Sister White gave two searching and powerful, practical discourses, and Brother White favored us with good wholesome counsel and many words of good cheer in our business sessions.—[Ibid., January 11, 1877.](#)

Proposal of a Bible Institute

One of the points introduced by James White was the suggestion that a Bible institute be held in California:

We called attention of the brethren to the importance of a Biblical institute being held in this State by Elder Uriah Smith of Battle Creek, Michigan, during the month of April, 1877. We urged—

That our principal hope for accession of numbers to help extend the cause on this coast is in the proper selection and thorough drilling of young men to go forth and teach the Word of God, and circulate our publications among the reading public.—[Ibid.](#)

The time was favorable, he pointed out, just before the tent campaign and the harvesting of crops in California. He felt that at least fifty persons needing “such a drill” could be brought together for such a session. In the *Signs* of February 1, he set forth the plans.

[57] It would probably run about four weeks with two or three lectures each day. The Oakland church (sixty members) would open their new house of worship for the lectures and bear the incidental expenses arising from the meetings. Explaining the work, White stated that it would offer “thorough training on theoretical and practical subjects, besides the spiritual benefit which is ardently hoped will attend such a gathering” ([Ibid., February 1, 1877.](#))

As they neared the time of opening, he commented, somewhat in warning,

The lecturers will be thoroughly prepared for the work of the occasion, and students will have all they can do, early and late, without taking time to visit. Plain living, and hard study, will be necessary to success on the part of students who shall take this course.—[Ibid.](#), [March 1, 1877](#).

He expected a large attendance, and advised: “If students will bring bedding, and can live on bread and fruit, the floors of the church basement, office [Pacific Press], and some other rooms will be free to them.”

The institute opened in connection with the California State Quarterly Meeting held on Sabbath, and the dedication of the Oakland house of worship on the weekend of March 31 and April 1. James White enthusiastically reported:

The Biblical institute opens very encouragingly and promises to accomplish more than we had hoped.... Here are young men of mind and culture who are making the best of their time in close study of the great Bible truths that lie at the foundation of the last message. Great results will appear in the future history of the cause from this series of Biblical lectures.—[Ibid.](#), [April 5, 1877](#).

Some forty-seven students attended. At its close he wrote of the work done:

The lecturer took a brief survey of subjects, guarded well all critical points, put questions to the class upon the previous lecture, and answered questions presented in writing. This work usually occupied an hour. Two or more lectures were given each day. This kept the class hard at work. Thus sixteen days were profitably and very agreeably spent by Elder Smith and his class at Oakland, California.—[Ibid.](#), [May 3, 1877](#).

J. H. Waggoner and James White also participated in giving some of the lectures. Uriah Smith calculated that the matter presented to the class in the seventeen days was equal to “sixty-four

[58] ordinary lectures.” He noted that “some of the most important subjects were presented by Brother White,” who he said “attended and took part in the work as other duties would permit.” As to the class, Smith reported that they gave evidence that they had come to work, and the “interest continued unflagging to the close.”

In his report to the readers of the *Review*, Smith described the closing days of the institute:

The last two days three sessions were held each day, during which the time was largely occupied by Brother and Sister White in giving instruction to the class of a practical nature, touching the best methods of study and labor, and the course to be pursued by those who labor in public or private in the sacred cause of present truth. This was most timely, and was highly appreciated by the class.—[The Review and Herald, May 3, 1877](#).

Soon after Uriah Smith had given his first lectures, arrangements were made for a presentation of the material in synopsis form in the *Signs of the Times*. The May 3 issue carried lesson one on “The Great Image of Daniel, Second Chapter,” and lesson two, “The Vision of Daniel, Seventh Chapter.” Anticipating the publication of the material in book form, the editors had the type set in a column wider than usual so it could be used in a book as well.

By urgent request, Smith was detained on the Pacific Coast for a number of weeks, making it possible for him to visit most of the churches.

James and Ellen White continued with their writing; in her case, she pressed on with the events of the Passion Week in the life of Christ. On Friday morning, May 11, after they had been in California for twenty-five weeks, they took the train for Battle Creek.

Chapter 5—(1877) In the East Again

[59]

To commute each year between the East and the West had become, it seems, a way of life for James and Ellen White. A telegram calling James to Battle Creek to supervise the enlarging of the sanitarium triggered their leaving for the East in harmony with promises made months before ([Testimonies for the Church, 4:271](#)). They took the train on the morning of Friday, May 11, bound for Omaha and Battle Creek.

James White described the first few hours of the trip:

After numerous valises and lunch baskets were properly adjusted by the assistance of the porter, we found ourselves well located in a good sleeper with quiet companions in travel.... As evening came on, there were signs of recent rains on the foothills, and by bedtime the air was cool and refreshing. Slept well all night as our train moved up the ascent, around among the mountain peaks, and on through the dreaded snowsheds. Awoke in the morning feeling that we had gained a great victory over weariness.—[The Signs of the Times, May 17, 1877](#).

Whenever they could, the Whites avoided travel on the Sabbath, but in this case they were on the cars. White gives a description of their activities:

It was Sabbath morning, and how to spend the sacred day to the acceptance of the Lord of the Sabbath became a matter of counsel. We decided that after the morning repast from our lunch baskets of plain bread, oranges, and cherries, we would spread our adjustable table with copies of the *Signs, Review*,

[60]

Reformer, and the blessed Bible. With these, full of truth and interest, to enjoy, the hours of the Sabbath passed sweetly by.—[Ibid.](#)

From Oakland to Battle Creek was a six-day trip, bringing them to their destination on Thursday, May 17. The home they owned in Battle Creek had been rented, so was not available to them. Arrangements were made for them to have a room in the Review and Herald building, and friends did what they could. It was not long until James White took his pen and wrote, “Battle Creek has never seemed more like home, so far as a pilgrim and stranger can have a home in this world.”—[The Review and Herald, May 24, 1877.](#)

He spoke Sabbath morning to a congregation that filled to overflowing the house of worship, with five hundred persons present, and he noted that “a fourth house of worship must soon be erected, capable of comfortably seating not less than one thousand persons.” But this would have to wait until the next year and the building of the “Dime” Tabernacle. He found what he termed “our beloved Battle Creek College” in encouraging circumstances with a good enrollment. Dr. J. H. Kellogg had recently arrived to take charge of the Health Institute and it was “prospering gloriously.” Patronage had grown to the point that there were between ninety and one hundred guests and another twenty-five who came in from the community for treatment. “Dr. J. H. Kellogg,” wrote the local editor of the *Review*, “has the entire confidence of the patients, by whom he is justly held in high esteem.”—[Ibid., June 7, 1877.](#) The *Health Reformer*, James White noted, “is the ablest and most practical health journal printed” ([Ibid., May 24, 1877.](#)).

Of the Health Institute, renamed by Dr. Kellogg the “Medical and Surgical Sanitarium,” White wrote:

When we have been urged to build during the past three or four years, we have objected on the ground that our buildings and facilities were equal to our doctors. Now that we have men of ability, refinement, and sterling sense, educated at the best medical schools on the continent, we are ready to build. Not less than \$25,000 will be laid out in building the present summer.—[Ibid.](#)

White went on to tell of how five years before he and Ellen [61] became certain that the institute could not rise to its full measure of usefulness without thoroughly educated physicians, and plans were laid to gain the point. Young men were chosen to train to serve as physicians. As to the result:

Dr. J. H. Kellogg has been as true as steel. Drs. Fairfield and Sprague, who are studying under him, will graduate at the highest medical school on the continent in the spring of 1878. It is a disgrace to Seventh-day Adventists to do a second-class job in anything.—[Ibid.](#)

Before long the foundations were being laid for an institution that would measure with the skills of the newly trained physicians.

Most earnestly James White engaged in forwarding the several interests. His activities also included “preaching, writing, and holding board meetings at the Review office, the college, and the sanitarium, nearly always working into the night” ([Testimonies for the Church, 4:272](#)). As for Ellen White, she had suffered pain in her heart for several months, and this did not leave her. As the pressures increased they thought to get away for a time, going to Colorado where they could find rest and retreat as they had occasionally done in the past. But of this she wrote:

While [I was] planning for the journey, a voice seemed to say to me: “Put the armor on. I have work for you to do in Battle Creek.” The voice seemed so plain that I involuntarily turned to see who was speaking. I saw no one, and at the sense of the presence of God my heart was broken in tenderness before Him. When my husband entered the room, I told him the exercises of my mind. We wept and prayed together. Our arrangements had been made to leave in three days, but now all our plans were changed.”—[Ibid.](#)

Ellen White and the Sanitarium

Ellen White had taken a special interest in the developments at the Sanitarium. She understood, perhaps better than others, its

[62] potential field of fruitful service. With burgeoning patronage and a capable staff, the care of the guests broadened to include recreational activities such as driving about the town or visits to Goguac Lake, two miles to the south. On Wednesday, May 30, a picnic at the lake was planned for the staff and guests. Of her participation in this she reported:

I was urged to be present and speak to the patients. Had I consulted my feelings I should not have ventured, but I thought perhaps this might be a part of the work I was to do in Battle Creek.

At the usual hour, tables were spread with hygienic food, which was partaken of with a keen relish. At three o'clock the exercises were opened with prayer and singing. I had great freedom in speaking to the people. All listened with the deepest interest.—[Ibid.](#)

As she wrote to Edson and Emma of the occasion, she mentioned that “it was one of the fairest days of early summer. The blue waters spread out like a mirror under the sunlight, while the groves skirting the lake were reflected upon its placid surface.”—[Letter 45, 1877.](#)

About fifty were in her audience, and she endeavored to lead their minds from nature to nature's God. She described Christ's ministry by the lake as He taught the multitude on the shore, drawing lessons from nature and the common events of life. From a stand she raised a large bouquet of flowers in a vase, and, according to editor C. W. Stone:

With language the most eloquent she inspired her hearers with hope and trust in the great Teacher, representing Him as a Being of tender love and infinite goodness. A few steps away was the border of the lake, with the boats in waiting by the shore. Everything conspired to carry the mind right back to the days of our Saviour's preaching by the seashore.—[The Review and Herald, June 7, 1877.](#)

As to the response she reported:

All listened with the deepest interest. After I had ceased speaking, Judge Graham of Wisconsin, a patient at the sanitarium, arose and proposed that the lecture be printed and circulated among the patients and others for their moral and physical benefit, that the words spoken that day might never be forgotten or disregarded. The proposition was approved by a unanimous vote.—[Testimonies for the Church, 4:272.](#)

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The address was published in a pamphlet entitled “The Sanitarium Patients at Goghuac Lake.” One person to grasp her hand warmly as she stepped down from the stand was R. Hutchinson, a minister and a fellow laborer of William Miller and Joshua V. Himes, back in 1843 and 1844. He was in despair, but the talk given by the lake reached his heart and he called on her for help. “Wonderful!” exclaimed James White, as he wrote to Willie of the experience. “He is a splendid, good, sweet Christian gentleman hungering for living religion.”—JW to WCW, June 10, 1877.

Triumphant Close of the School Year

The close of the school year for Battle Creek College was right upon them. Ellen White had been anxious for those students who were either unconverted or backslidden. She had desired to speak to them, but felt too feeble to undertake labor; the experience at Goghuac Lake provided evidence that God would sustain her in working for the salvation of the students. Meetings were held, and she devoted a week to revival and instructional efforts. Of this she wrote:

I tried to impress upon them that a life of purity and prayer would not be a hindrance to them in obtaining a thorough knowledge of the sciences, but that it would remove many hindrances to their progress in knowledge.... I sought to impress upon the students the fact that our school is to take a higher position in an educational point of view than any other institution of learning, by opening before the young nobler views, aims, and objects of life, and educating them to have a correct knowledge of human duty and eternal interests.—[Ibid., 4:273, 274.](#)

As the closing exercises of the college were to be held at Goguac Lake, it was decided that a baptism should be a part of the program. Four hundred people assembled in the grove by the lake. James White led fourteen students into the water and buried them with their Lord in baptism. Ellen White gave an address, later reported in [Signs of the Times, February 7, 1878](#)[The Signs of the Times, February 14, 1878](#).

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Large Temperance Meeting

On their return from the lake Ellen White was met by a committee consisting of Mayor Austin; W. H. Skinner, cashier of the First National Bank; and C. C. Peavy. They invited her to speak Sunday evening, July 1, in the new Michigan tent, lent to the temperance forces in the city for a mass meeting. Barnum's circus was to be in Battle Creek on June 28, and the Michigan Conference tent was used for a temperance restaurant aimed at keeping the crowds from seeking their repast at the saloons. The Sanitarium table in the center of the tent, more than thirty feet in length at first and then extended, with the addition of another table, to about fifty, proved to be the most popular of all tables set. Wrote James White:

It was really encouraging to hygienists to see scores of hungry citizens and country people turning away from the side tables, laden with their favorite pork and beans, roast beef, salads, tea, coffee, et cetera, and crowding about the Sanitarium table with an almost childlike eagerness to secure a square hygienic meal. Not a seat was left vacant a moment, and there were usually a score or two of persons standing behind the long lines of diners, ready to drop into a seat the instant it was vacated.

The popular prejudice, usually expressed in such terms as "bran bread," "starvation diet," and similar epithets, melted away "like mist before the rising sun": and words of commendation were in the mouth of everyone. The whole affair was a grand success. More than one third of the tickets sold at 25 cents each were taken up

at the Sanitarium table.—[The Review and Herald, July 5, 1877.](#)

One evening in the tent, Dr. Kellogg gave a lecture on temperance from a medical and scientific standpoint. Sunday evening Ellen White addressed five thousand and spoke for ninety minutes on temperance, from the religious and home standpoint, to an audience who listened in “almost breathless silence” ([Testimonies for the Church, 4:275](#)).

Writing and Mary Clough

Without the help of Mary Clough (who had been left ill in California), and pressed with other tasks, Ellen White laid aside her writing on the life of Christ. “We are here without a home and without help,” James White wrote to Willie on June 10, but in his letter he rejoiced that Mary was getting better. But it was not alone for Mary’s physical health that Ellen White was concerned. For a year and a half Mary had been assisting her, and the acceptance on her part of the truths of the third angel’s message that Ellen had hoped for seemed to be growing more distant. To Edson in Oakland, she wrote:

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We have felt that unless Mary should give her heart to God and live and obey the truth, she will be of but little advantage to us in our work. If her heart is at variance with the truth, it does not look reasonable that she should be long engaged with us in the work. If she does not accept the truth we love and cherish, she will decide against it.—[Letter 2, 1877.](#)

She further commented: “Persons are not generally apt to continue long in the position she now occupies. We love Mary....I have just sent her a letter of sixteen pages urging upon her the necessity of giving her heart to God.”

When James and Ellen White reached Battle Creek in mid-May, camp meetings were in progress, and he knew many would be expecting him and his wife to be attending them. Of this he wrote: “We are invited to attend the camp meetings; but we dare not risk

the strain.”—[The Review and Herald, May 24, 1877](#). He anticipated that the next few months would be given partly to his writing, but mainly to the interests right there in Battle Creek, with the enlarging of the Sanitarium buildings taking priority.

In an editorial in the *Review* of June 21, White rejoiced over the cheering reports coming in from the camp meetings. He observed:

Our people are learning to trust in God as never before. Our young ministers are learning to take responsibilities. Let them have a chance. It is a great mistake for a set of preachers to get the idea that nobody is exactly qualified to speak at our camp meetings excepting themselves. We fear that in some cases we have been in the way of younger men.

Thus James and Ellen White excused themselves from the early camp meetings and remained in Battle Creek. Ellen White soon returned to writing on the life of Christ for *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume [66] 3, and James White attended to the many interests of the cause. Late in July he wrote:

We have been much occupied with the plans [for the enlargement of the Health Institute], and the general oversight of the execution of those plans, for far greater facilities for the treatment, board, and lodging of the sick. A bathroom 50 by 60 feet, with three stories, is being built, and pushed forward as fast as possible. And the foundation of the main building is being laid, 136 by 46 feet, three stories besides a basement kitchen, all to be heated with steam....

We build this year, and at the close of the winter’s course of lectures at Bellevue, New York, Medical College, at the opening of next spring, God favoring the work, we shall have three or four young men holding diplomas from the highest medical school on the continent, imbued with the true spirit of the great health reformation.—[The Signs of the Times, August 9, 1877](#).

At about the same time Ellen White described their situation to Edson and Emma: Willie and Mary White had come from California and were now in Battle Creek with the intent that Willie would take some school work, learning German and French, preparatory to going to Europe to assist in getting a publishing house started there in a strong way. “We are truly itinerants,” she wrote to Edson and Emma. “We are engaged in getting settled again at housekeeping. Your father has been absent in company with Willie one week in Indiana and Chicago.”—[Letter 7, 1877](#).

Camp Meetings Again

Pressure built for James and Ellen White to attend the later camp meetings. In anticipation of the Indiana camp meeting she was to attend, she wrote: “I commence traveling again while at the same time I am preparing volume 3 of *Spirit of Prophecy*.” She added, “God may spare my life to complete it. The future is with the Lord.”—[Ibid.](#) Friday, August 10, she was at Kokomo, Indiana, for the opening of the camp meeting. Mary White traveled with her, for James was so deeply involved in publishing and Sanitarium interests, and much worn, that he did not go. The meeting was held in a grove, with excellent attendance—on Sunday the people turned out en masse from neighboring cities, villages, and country until there were seven thousand on the ground. Ellen White addressed them, speaking for an hour and a half ([The Signs of the Times, August 23, 1877](#)). And of course she took other meetings.

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The plans for the Massachusetts camp meeting, to be held again at Groveland, were too enticing to resist. The *Review* of August 16 carried the word that James White might accompany his wife. D. M. Canright and S. N. Haskell were expected at the Massachusetts meeting and might go on with the Whites to Maine and Vermont.

On Sabbath morning, August 18, White spoke to the believers in Battle Creek; in the afternoon he gave close attention to hearing the reading of a portion of the manuscript for *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 3, on the trial, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. Sunday, he began work at five o'clock in the morning and continued until midnight. Monday morning he was ill. As the Whites later looked back on the experience, they felt it was probably another

stroke of paralysis, for it left him greatly debilitated ([Testimonies for the Church, 4:276, 277](#)). As the time for the Groveland camp meeting neared, Ellen felt she would probably have to go without James, but when the time came to leave Battle Creek, he decided to go with her, even if he was not well.

The 1877 Groveland Camp Meeting

As the year before, the crowds attending the Groveland camp meeting on Sunday, August 26, were huge. Accommodations had been improved over those of the year before. The seats had backs, and a “fine organ” lent by a local merchant added to the services. The Haverhill *Daily Bulletin* for August 27 had this to say about the Sunday afternoon meeting:

The great occasion of the day was the afternoon service. The trains from all directions had brought immense crowds upon the ground, and the grove literally swarmed with people. Mrs. White spoke on the subject of Christian temperance. This lady is a forcible and impressive speaker, and holds the crowd with her clear utterances and convincing logic.

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The great pavilion was crowded to its utmost capacity, while a living wall three or four tiers in depth stood around the outside. Those who wished to listen had an opportunity, while those who came to stroll, strolled, and so all seemed to be satisfied.

The Meeting in the Danvers Tent

On Monday evening Ellen White slipped away from the Groveland meeting to speak in nearby Danvers, where Canright was conducting an evangelistic tent meeting. Writing of the experience, she said:

I was sick and had but little strength; yet the cars were fast bearing us on to my appointment in Danvers. Here I must stand before entire strangers, whose minds had been prejudiced by false reports and wicked slander.

I thought that if I could have strength of lungs, clearness of voice, and freedom from pain of heart, I would be very grateful to God. These thoughts and feelings were kept to myself, and in great distress I silently called upon God. I was too weary to arrange my thoughts in connected words; but I felt that I must have help, and asked for it with my whole heart. Physical and mental strength I must have if I spoke that night. I said over and over again in my silent prayer: "I hang my helpless soul on Thee, O God, my Deliverer. Forsake me not in this hour of my need."

As the time for the meeting drew on, my spirit wrestled in agony of prayer for strength and power from God. While the last hymn was being sung, I went to the stand. I stood up in great weakness, knowing that if any degree of success attended my labors it would be through the strength of the Mighty One.

The Spirit of the Lord rested upon me as I attempted to speak. Like a shock of electricity I felt it upon my heart and all pain was instantly removed. I had suffered great pain in the nerves centering in the brain; this also was removed. My irritated throat and sore lungs were relieved. My left arm and hand had become nearly useless in consequence of pain in my heart, but natural feeling was now restored. My mind was clear; my soul was full of the light and love of God. Angels of God seemed to be on every side, like a wall of fire.—[Ibid.](#), 4:280, 281.

Two hundred people stood outside the crowded tent, and Ellen White spoke to the attentive audience for an hour and ten minutes. Returning the next day to Groveland, she found the meeting breaking up—a meeting she declared to be one of the best camp meetings she ever attended. Soon they would be leaving for the Haskell home in South Lancaster, but before leaving the grounds, Canright and Haskell, James, Jenny Ings, and she found a quiet and secluded place in the grove where they united in special prayer for the abundant

[69]

blessing of health and grace to rest upon her husband. Ellen White reported:

This season of prayer was a very precious one, and the sweet peace and joy that settled upon us was our assurance that God heard our petitions.—[Ibid.](#), 4:281, 282.

S. N. Haskell, the conference president, had his horse and carriage on the grounds, and James White felt it would be pleasant to drive across country to the Haskell home in South Lancaster. Leaving after the noonday meal, they drove fifteen miles and stopped at a farmhouse for the night. The next morning they continued the thirty miles to the Haskell home. Just a week later the Vermont camp meeting would open, and Ellen White had promised to be there. There were many seasons of prayer in James's behalf, and he was greatly blessed, but not healed. "We are holding fast the promises of God" ([Letter 13, 1877](#)), wrote Ellen White to William and Mary in Battle Creek.

Although James would not be able to participate in the work, the feeling among those close to them was that he should accompany his wife to the Vermont meeting.

They returned home just in time for the Michigan camp meeting that opened in Lansing the evening of September 18, and for the sixteenth annual session of the General Conference to be held on the campground commencing Thursday, September 20.

The Michigan Camp Meeting

As the Michigan camp meeting closed on Sunday, September 30, Uriah Smith in his report declared, "It will be safe to say that Seventh-day Adventists never held a camp meeting like the one just closed. We know not in what respect it did not surpass all its predecessors."—[The Review and Herald, October 4, 1877](#).

[70] On the first Sunday there were from six to eight thousand people on the grounds, and the second Sunday from eight to ten thousand. The skies were blue and the sun shone full, which made the shade of the grove in which the meeting was held particularly attractive.

Some two thousand to twenty-five hundred believers were present for at least a portion of the camp meeting.

Uriah Smith, as he reported the Lansing camp meeting, could not refrain from thinking of other and earlier meetings. He wrote:

We thought of the first general meeting of this people which we attended, twenty-three years ago, in the house of Brother White, in Rochester, New York. All assembled were conveniently accommodated in one room. The publishing work was then comparatively in its infancy, and the issuing of books scarcely commenced. Yet there the loud cry of the third angel's message was looked forward to and talked about.—[Ibid.](#)

He pondered as to what those few gathered there in Rochester in 1854 would have thought could they have seen what surrounded him and the Whites on the Michigan campground. He conjectured: "Would they not have thought that the loud cry they were expecting had already come?"

The General Conference Session

The General Conference session held during the camp meeting was a profitable one. James White was delayed a day or two, and S. N. Haskell was called upon to preside at the opening meetings. Among the actions taken, one read:

Whereas, The Biblical institute lately held in California has proved so instrumental in the preparation of young men for this work, that, by its means, the number of laborers in that State has been almost doubled;

Resolved, That Elders James White and Uriah Smith be requested to continue to hold such Biblical institutes during the coming year, in such States and at such times as the General Conference Committee may advise.—[Ibid.](#)

Another interesting action related to the gift of prophecy and its place in the church:

[71]

Resolved, That each year's experience in this message confirms our faith that God has chosen Brother and Sister White to fill a leading position in this work; that we never felt the need of their counsel and experienced labors more than now; and therefore we earnestly pray God to sustain them with strength and wisdom for their arduous labors....

Whereas, During the experience of a quarter of a century of this work we have invariably seen those persons and parties who have separated themselves from us in opposition to the gift of prophecy which God has placed in the remnant church go into divisions, confusion, or cease to accomplish anything in the work of present truth; therefore

Resolved, That we hereby express our continued conviction that we are largely indebted to the gift of prophecy, as manifested through Sister White, for the harmony and unity which this people enjoy.—*Ibid.*

Meetings of the auxiliary organizations—the SDA Publishing Association, the Health Institute, the SDA Educational Society, and the General Tract and Missionary Society—were held one each on successive days, and the reports of each carried the signature “James White, President.”

On Sabbath, October 6, following the General Conference session, Ellen White took the morning service in the Battle Creek church. The meetinghouse was filled to capacity, and she made a deep impression on the audience. That evening the ordinances were celebrated, and the church felt they were favored by having James and Ellen White with them in the service. On Monday, October 8, they were off for Oakland and their home in the West. Of this, Smith informed the readers of the *Review* in the issue of October 11:

Admonished by the chill of approaching winter, Brother White returns to the mild climate of California. As he and Sister White again leave us, the prayers of this people go with them that their going may be a mutual blessing to themselves and the cause on the Pacific

Coast, and that in due time they may return to us in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

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Chapter 6—(1877-1878) Priority One—James White’s Health

One Sunday evening, October 14, James and Ellen White arrived in Oakland. A little note in the October 18, *Signs* stated that “Elder White is in poor health, “but had endured the journey well.

Sabbath, the Whites met with the church at Oakland; Ellen White spoke again Sunday evening.

For the readers of the *Review and Herald*, James White submitted this note:

We are very happy to find ourselves again in beautiful Oakland, with improving health. Mrs. White is very well, and labors with more power and the blessing of God than ever before. We meet the friends in this our former field of labor with great pleasure. The work in the Pacific Coast States and Territories is great and moves forward gloriously.... Truth triumphs in this field. God is with His people.—*Ibid.*, [November 1, 1877](#)

After the weekend meetings in Oakland they were off, accompanied by Mary Clough, for a tour among the churches to the north in the Sonoma and Russian River valleys—in this case, Petaluma, Santa Rosa, and Healdsburg. They were back again to meet with the Oakland church the first weekend in November ([The Signs of the Times, November 1, 1877](#)). The reports of their work frequently mentioned that James White’s health was steadily improving ([The Review and Herald, November 8, 1877](#)). Actually the recovery was very slow, and a pattern of labor was being established that was reflected in his report of the second weekend spent in Oakland in early November:

[73]

Mrs. White and the writer met with the church at Oakland in their house of worship, Sabbath, November

3. We opened the meeting and spoke quite fully upon the progress of the cause. Mrs. White followed with a stirring discourse for one hour. A social meeting followed.

First-day evening Mrs. White addressed a good congregation who would not be deterred from coming out in the heavy rain.—[The Signs of the Times, November 8, 1877.](#)

The change of scene and the milder climate of California was no quick remedy. On October 26, after writing of his slow recovery in a letter to Willie and Mary at Battle Creek, Ellen White stated her position:

I will not be impatient. I will hope and trust and pray. We shall see the salvation of God. We have some sweet refreshing seasons from the presence of the Lord. I will not let clouds shadow my mind. "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice." Not one murmur shall escape my lips or linger about my soul.—[Letter 28, 1877.](#)

Plans announced by James White for the winter's work had to be modified—the struggle to regain his overdrawn account in physical resources was long and tedious. Ellen White soon found that his care called for her to even curtail her plans for writing. Soon after their arrival in the West, she told the story in a brief letter to William and Mary in Battle Creek:

Dear Children,

I am tired tonight. I have been trying to get a piece for the [*Health*] *Reformer*. It is hard to write much, for Father is so lonesome I have to ride out with him and devote considerable time to keep him company. Father is quite cheerful but talks but little. We have some very precious seasons of prayer. We believe that God will raise him to health. We are of good courage.—[Letter 25, 1877.](#)

[74] The modified work program James White was forced to accept, while limiting him in filling speaking engagements, did allow him to do some writing. Even that was limited as it seemed to him, but quite expansive as we review it today. To him the *Signs of the Times* was a very dear and cherished child. Through 1877 its editorial masthead carried three names: James White, J. N. Andrews, and Uriah Smith. Smith resided in Battle Creek, Andrews in Switzerland, and White divided his time between the West and the East. The rather vital position of managing editor was in the early part of 1877 filled by Mary K. White, Willie's wife, followed by the versatile and talented Lucinda Hall.

Mrs. Hall did so well that James White, shortly after the return to California, wrote commendably:

She is an editor. Writers are plenty, while good editors are scarce. It is in preparing, selecting, and arranging the thoughts of others that editorial talent appears.—[The Review and Herald, January 31, 1878.](#)

Making the *Signs* his prime task, White immediately began furnishing editorials and articles for almost every issue. He described his plans for the new volume of the *Signs*, soon to begin:

Besides valuable matter such as appeared in volume three, the next volume will contain chapters on the life incidents of the writer, also those remarkable events in the life and experience of Mrs. White, which will reach quite through the volume.—[The Signs of the Times, December 20, 1877.](#)

He wrote of the excellent circulation during 1877, standing at an average of eight thousand copies per issue, and of the physical appearance of the paper, “far in advance of papers of its kind”—the *Signs* being printed on a good white sheet, from “types...nearly new, and press work good” ([Ibid.](#)).

Edson, now business manager of the Pacific Press, and his wife, Emma, lived close to the publishing house in a new cottage that they owned. “He does well in the office,” Ellen White wrote, and added,

“We hope he will have the help of God in all he does.”—[Letter 26, 1877](#). The little nieces, Addie and May Walling, for whom James and Ellen White had the care, were in Battle Creek with Willie and Mary. Addie was now 11, and May, 8. “I miss the little girls very much,” Ellen White wrote on October 21, “but I believe that they are in the right place. May God bless them.”—[Letter 27, 1877](#).

Among the Churches in Northern California

[75]

During the closing months of 1877, James and Ellen White, traveling by carriage, continued to minister to the churches in northern California. The back page of the *Signs* carried notices of appointments, and its columns yielded reports of their work. Ellen's letters to Willie and Mary in Battle Creek filled in the more intimate details. On October 26 she wrote from Healdsburg:

Today we visited the redwoods. Brother Cook accompanied us. Father kept the lines over the highest ascent and down. He seems to feel assurance in driving our gentle and perfectly manageable team. I think ...the best thing Father can do at present is to be out all that he can riding. He walks considerably too....

I get up at four o'clock and do my best at writing and every spare moment I snatch up my pencil and write what I can. The Lord is blessing me with good health, cheerful spirits, and with His grace, which I prize above everything else.—[Letter 29, 1877](#).

Some trips had to be cut short when her husband's health took a turn for the worse. This was so on an extended trip that was to take them to Healdsburg, circle through St. Helena and Napa, and then back to Oakland—but they had to turn back at Healdsburg.

In a letter to Mary White in Battle Creek, she called for her dress patterns; in the next few letters she repeated the request for patterns and materials. She wanted to get on with her sewing.

Ellen White's Fiftieth Birthday

Ellen White's fiftieth birthday fell on Monday, November 26. It came while they were on one of their tours by horse and carriage. She wrote of it to Willie and Mary the next day from Healdsburg:

My birthday is past without commemoration. Father and I went to Green Valley from Healdsburg, fourteen miles and back. The road part of the way was bad. We wandered out of the way some.

[76] We arrived at Brother Ross's. They had nothing in the home to eat. I tended a babe, held it in one arm and prepared my dinner myself. Made a little mush, cooked some eggs, and put on a few cold gems. This composed my dinner, birthday dinner, half a century old! Not much display in this.

But then our birth does not amount to much. It is not of much consequence in regard to our birth—not half as much as in regard to our lives. How do we live? Our daily life will either honor or dishonor the day of our birth.—[Letter 39, 1877](#).

But her husband had not forgotten her birthday. Most likely it was before they set out that Monday morning with the carriage that he wrote a eulogy published on the editorial page of the *Signs* under the heading of "Half a Century":

Today, November 26, Mrs. White is 50 years old. She became a devoted Christian at the tender age of 12 years, and immediately became a laborer for other youth, and was very successful in winning them to Christ.

At the early age of 17 years she became a powerful public speaker, and was able to hold large audiences an hour or more. She has traveled and spoken to large audiences, some of them reaching as far as twenty thousands, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, in eighteen States, besides the Canadas. She has now labored publicly thirty-three years.

Besides this great labor she has written an immense amount. Her books now in print amount to not less than five thousand pages, besides thousands of pages of epistolary matter addressed to churches and individuals.

And notwithstanding this great work, Mrs. White is, at the age of 50 years, as active as at any former time in her life, and more efficient in her labors. Her health is excellent, and during the last season's camp meetings she was able to perform as much labor in speaking, exhorting, and praying as two of our ablest ministers....

Mrs. White enters upon the second half-century of her life, with the confident expectation of spending most of it over on the evergreen shore.—[The Signs of the Times, December 6, 1877.](#)

As to James White and his improving health, she testified that the Sabbath before her birthday he addressed the church in Petaluma, speaking for an hour, "as well as he ever spoke in his life" ([Letter 39, 1877](#)).

[77]

Visit to St. Helena

What they were unable to accomplish the month before, they were now in early December able to do. Driving from Healdsburg, they reached, at about dark, the home of William Pratt, three miles north of St. Helena. Rather ecstatically James White reported in the *Signs*:

Here we remained as a sort of headquarters, riding out each day over the most circuitous roads we have seen since we left Colorado. Here we find Dr. M. G. Kellogg, very busy in establishing an institution for the cure of the sick [the St. Helena Sanitarium]. The locality is well selected, and the doctor is to be associated with brethren of ability and means. The enterprise will doubtless be a grand success.

We were able to perform this journey of thirty miles over as romantic [a] mountain road as we have seen in

Vermont, Pennsylvania, Colorado, or California, with our carriage. As we stopped by the roadside and kindled fire both going and coming, it forcibly reminded us of our Michigan itinerary, when then as now, after providing the faithful horse with a good dinner we partook of our simple repast of bread and fruit.—December 20, 1877.

Sabbath and Sunday they met with the church in St. Helena, with believers coming in from Napa, Yountville, and other places. The Baptist church was secured for the Sabbath services, held both morning and afternoon. Sunday afternoon Ellen White spoke in the theater to a general audience, with all available standing room fully occupied. The weather was delightful; they drove up Howell Mountain and were intrigued by the view of “mountains and valleys,” and were impressed with the “stately mountain pines that girt about twenty feet.”

But in all of this neither James nor Ellen White could see the recovery they had hoped and prayed for. “Father has improved in many respects,” she wrote Willie and Mary from St. Helena, “but he is failing in flesh.” He suffered disagreeable sensations and [78] unfavorable symptoms ([Letter 40, 1877](#)). Again the outlook was dark, and in pouring out her heart to her children she confided:

There is no soul I can go to for counsel or for help but Jesus. L. M. [Lucinda] Hall is so thoroughly engaged she can do nothing to help me in sharing my burdens. My trouble with Mary [Clough] and her mother has told upon me severely. I am unable to write because of my hand and heart troubles. And Father is the last person in the world to whom I should go with any expectancy that he could get beyond himself sufficiently to appreciate my feelings. I must think and act all for myself. I so much long to have an interested God-fearing friend that I can talk and counsel with.—[Ibid.](#)

Then she disclosed what she and James were considering. They remembered the blessing their Greenville farm in Michigan had been

to them as he was recovering from the severe stroke that smote him down in 1865. Wrote Ellen White:

We have been to Healdsburg and looked around for a home there. We found a very nice location [on west Dry Creek Road] two miles from Healdsburg in the mountains. There are fifteen acres of land which gives us the scenery of Colorado and the advantages of the Greenville farm Father thought so much of. I never was on a place I was so much pleased with. Madrona and manzanita and beautiful evergreens; living springs—several of them are on the place. The price is \$1,400.

We should buy ten acres more, which would carry it up to \$1,600. There is only a poor little shanty on the place, but it has a good fireplace, which is all the redeeming feature of the house. We must build a plain, simple house costing about \$600, barn, et cetera.

This may look like a wild project to you, but if Father can be called away and out of thinking of himself and can enjoy work out of doors, it will be the best thing he can do and be the best investment of means we can make. We must have a place of retirement where we can step out of doors without being seen by our neighbors. We want a chance to pray in the groves and mountains. We shall have no wood to buy; [there is] plenty on the place. We think for health this location [is] above any that we can find in St. Helena.

[79]

Willie, I am satisfied Father should not write much. He must have something to engage his mind besides what he has had. There must be a change.—*Ibid.*

In his report of the visit to St. Helena, James White wrote of how he longed for retirement, and “rest from perpetual mental strain.” He longed to “walk over the mountain sides, to ride on horseback and in our carriage, and to do light work in cultivating vegetables and fruits, and spend much time in reflection and prayer among the evergreens.” He added, “God blessed us greatly at a similar home at Greenville, Michigan, and in our mountain retreat in Colorado. We

hope to enjoy the same at Healdsburg.”—[The Signs of the Times, December 20, 1877](#).

The Healdsburg Hideout

Two weeks later they were on the ferry traveling northward from Oakland, bringing with them all their goods for housekeeping. “We leave Oakland for the present,” she wrote to the children in Battle Creek, “to test the retirement of rural life, hoping it will prove a decided advantage to Father.” She added:

His mind is exercised upon writing, and he will divide his time between writing and physical exercise. We have just such a place as will please Father, and it gives him something to do.... We shall build us a humble house, convenient with three fireplaces, one in the parlor, one in the sitting room, and one in the bedroom.—[Letter 42, 1877](#).

Again to the children in Battle Creek, she wrote on Christmas Day:

We are in our humble house [the “little shanty”], not half as much of a house as the Walling house under the hill in Colorado. We have four rooms, all small: two bedrooms, small kitchen, and a sitting room which serves for sitting room, parlor and dining room, and sleeping room. It is not quite twelve by twelve.

Our principal work as yet has been taking things up and setting them down again because we know not any place to put them. Sister Clemmens has quite a number of print [cloth] bags hung up above her head on all sides of the kitchen, for she has no pantry boxes, and rude shelves in nooks and corners she puts to best use.

A large box which brought one of our nice lounges from Oakland serves us for wardrobe and bookcase. All our goods we wish for use are here, piled up.... We have an old-fashioned fireplace. We have the great back

logs and we will use all the wood we want and not stint ourselves a bit.—[Letter 43, 1877](#).

James White chose to sleep in the living room by the fireplace. The blazing fire cheered his heart. Also sleeping in the living room was Augustus Collins ([The Signs of the Times, January 3, 1878](#)). This man was a new convert from the Northwest. Some weeks before, he had been invited to go to a “beast show” (a lecture on the symbolic beasts of [Daniel 7](#) and [Revelation 13](#)), where he had learned of the prophecies and the soon coming of Christ. He thought to obtain employment as a ship’s cook and to try to keep the Sabbath as best he could. Edson intercepted him, in Oakland, and sent him to Healdsburg to help his parents. Ellen White described him as a man of large general information and of considerable intelligence—earlier he had served General Robert E. Lee as an aide. “Father enjoys his society,” she wrote, “for he is a man with a most interesting experience.” He proved to be just the kind of help they needed in their new venture, and it was James White’s pleasure and privilege to baptize him in a nearby crystal-clear stream shortly after he had joined them on their mountain ranch ([Letter 43, 1877](#)).

Light Dawns for Ellen White

That Christmas Day Ellen White was glad to be able to give a favorable report to the children in Battle Creek:

Father is so happy riding his twenty-five-dollar pony, being interested in his little farm, and enjoying his warm, bright fire. He does not feel inclined to leave it for uncertainties of poor beds and perhaps stove heat, and he chooses to stay in his humble little home....

We are seeing already the beneficial effects of this move from Oakland. Father’s mind is diverted. He eats more liberally and it does not injure him. He sleeps like a baby from the time he retires till 5:00 or 6:00 A.M. He is cheerful. He is so pleased with his home. He tries to do what he can and is busy from morning till night about something. He spends some time in writing.

His mind is very happy dwelling upon Bible subjects. I am glad for every step he advances, climbing the hill of health.—[Ibid.](#)

Soon John Griffith, the builder, was on the ground, and the new barn was under construction. The house would follow. Griffith did his work economically and well.

By the end of the second week in January, 1878, the workmen had completed work on the Whites' barn. Work on the house was delayed because of the weather. As is usual for those parts, many of the January and February days were foggy or rainy, and work that James had hoped to do in the garden and fields was delayed as well. But Monday, January 14, was a pleasant day. He felt better and was "cheerful and of good courage," and Ellen White wrote to daughter Mary, "We are planting our garden."—[Letter 4c, 1878.](#)

The letter also tells of how, when her husband was discouraged and despondent, they had "praying seasons, three, four, and sometimes five a day" ([Ibid.](#)). As he felt able, James pressed on with writing, doing perhaps more than he should have. Ellen White felt burdened to write, but at this time she felt she could do but little. She wrote to the children in Battle Creek:

I will give time and attention to Father. He needs me. He has not society here as he would have at Oakland or Battle Creek. I am his constant companion in riding and by the fireside. Should I go, shut myself up in a room, and leave him sitting alone, he would become nervous and restless.—[Letter 4d, 1878.](#)

But she was pleased to state, "Father is patient, kind, not fault-finding. He loves and fears God. This affliction has been a great blessing to him spiritually. We are in perfect harmony. He depends on me and I shall not leave him in his feebleness."—[Ibid.](#)

Shuttling, Healdsburg—Oakland

But James and Ellen White could not keep away from Oakland. The *Signs of the Times* and the Pacific Press were James White's "children." In spite of earnest resolves and bold statements

of intention, Oakland with its interests was close to their hearts. During March, April, and May they shuttled between their Healdsburg hideout and Oakland.

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James's health was up and down, with little improvement. On the night of April 4 his true condition opened up to Ellen White in a vision. What was presented to her she wrote out the next day and is on file. It comprises a five-page double-spaced letter. It opens:
Dear Husband,

I dreamed last night that a celebrated physician came into the room while we were engaged in prayer for you. Said he, "Praying is well, but living out your prayers is still more essential. Your faith must be sustained by your works, else it is a dead faith. Be careful that your faith is not a dead faith.

"You are not brave in God. If there is any inconvenience, instead of accommodating yourself to circumstances, you will keep the matter, be it ever so small, in your mind until it suits you; therefore, you do not work out your faith. You have no real faith yet. You yearn but for victory. When your faith is made perfect by works, you will cease studying yourself and rest your case in the hands of God, bearing something, enduring something, not exactly in accordance with your feelings.

"All the powers on earth could not help you unless you work in harmony, exercising your reason and your judgment and setting aside your feelings and your inclination. You are in a critical condition. You are establishing a state of things in your system that is not easily subdued."—[Letter 22, 1878](#).

Then the "celebrated physician" took up specific items, particularly in relation to James's eating. Some very close things were said: "Your own depraved habits are keeping not only you but your wife from the work to which God has called you....

"You have felt so fearful you would be reduced in strength that you have eaten more than was necessary, placed in your stomach a greater amount of food than the system could take care of well....

[83] Your food should be taken dry and [you should] take a longer time to masticate it. Eat slowly and much less in quantity. Two or three articles at one meal is all that should be placed in the stomach.... You are dying of notions and yet you do not make sufficient efforts to produce a radical change.... Your life would be more secure in self-forgetfulness. God has a work for you and your wife to do. Satan says, “you shall not accomplish the work if I have power to control the mind. I can control everything and bind both as with fetters of iron.” ...You can arise. You can throw off this invalidism. Will you be a man and work with the prayers of God’s people?”—*Ibid.*

Andrew Brorson was brought in to give James White treatments. The two spent several weeks at Litton Springs, five miles from the Whites’ mountain farm home. There were reports of improvement. “Father’s symptoms are very encouraging,” wrote Ellen White on May 5. Then another step was taken: decision was reached that it would be best for him to return to Battle Creek and place himself under the care of Dr. Kellogg and his associates at the Sanitarium. White informed the readers of the *Signs*:

We give, in this week’s *Signs*, the report of the dedication of our Sanitarium building at Battle Creek, Michigan, and the appropriate address by Elder Canright. We were called to Battle Creek more than one year since to take charge of the general management of the large building. This with other laborious work proved too great a tax upon our strength, and we have been a sufferer for nine months. And not finding all that benefit we hoped by visiting this State, we have determined to return to Battle Creek to be under the skillful treatment of Dr. Kellogg, and his fellow physicians.—[The Signs of the Times, May 23, 1878.](#)

The next week the last page carried the notice that “we leave Oakland, California, for Battle Creek, Michigan, Friday, May 31.” He added, concerning plans:

We design to spend June and July at the Battle Creek Sanitarium.... We also expect to spend the month of

August in the State of Colorado, and return to attend the General Conference and camp meeting in Michigan.

Mrs. White designs to attend the Oregon camp meeting, and if her health will admit, she will join us at General Conference.—[Ibid., May 30, 1878](#)

Chapter 7—(1878) The Tide Turns

James White took heed to the counsel given in vision in early April by the “celebrated physician.” He was cheered by the promise “God would have you live.” “You can arise. You can throw off this invalidism,” he had been told ([Letter 22, 1878](#)). He set out to do what he could for himself and began to make steady progress toward recovery. As a part of the program he placed himself under the care of Dr. Kellogg at the newly enlarged Battle Creek Sanitarium. The results were very encouraging, and he became involved in the activities in Battle Creek. As president of the General Conference, how could he do otherwise?

Ellen White turned her attention to the Oregon camp meeting to be held at Salem, June 27 to July 2. She would travel there by ship, for California and Oregon were not yet linked by railroads. With others traveling from California to the camp meeting, she boarded the steamer *Oregon* in San Francisco on Monday afternoon, June 10. She was not at all well, but was optimistic in embarking on the four-day voyage. Her friends thought her presumptuous, but she thought she could rest, and even arranged to do considerable writing while on the voyage.

The *Oregon* was a good ship, and Captain Conner was attentive of the passengers, but the passage was very rough.

For the first few days after the voyage she rested and wrote some letters to members of the family. To James she confided:

[85]

I have felt very lonely since you left, away from husband and children, but when engaged in active labor I shall not feel this so keenly.... I am pleading with God to be qualified to do my work, looking to Him to guide me and not to be turned aside or diverted from it by any circumstances. God will help me.—[Letter 31, 1878](#).

To her close friend Lucinda Hall, in Oakland, she wrote:

I miss James oh, so much. I have feelings of indescribable loneliness, but yet I am among kind friends who do all for me that they can.—[Letter 29, 1878](#).

Before closing her letter, she expressed her great concern:

I feel the deepest interest in the cause and work of God for this time. My yearning heart's cry is for entire conformity to the will of God. I am not content. I must know the length, the breadth, the height and depth of perfect love. I cannot rest unless I know that God is working through me. I must be imbued with His Spirit. I am hungering and thirsting after righteousness.—[Ibid.](#)

The letters give a glimpse of the struggle she went through, torn between her understanding of her duty and the ties that bound her close to James. A few days later she wrote to him:

I am feeling more and more deeply that I must accomplish my work. I feel a preciousness, a nearness to God, and although I miss you very, very much, and love you, yet I feel at present I belong to God to wait for and do His will. I tell you freely it is a great sacrifice to my feelings to have you separated from me as you are, and yet it seems to be that it is as God would have it, and I must be reconciled. It has been hard, so hard. I wept and prayed and pondered and wept again, and the steady conviction forces itself upon me that it is right as it is. God's work is great. It demands our first attention. Separated as we are, we shall not be influenced by each other, but we shall look to God separately and do our work in His fear and to His glory.—[Letter 32, 1878](#).

The Oregon Camp Meeting

By the time the Oregon camp meeting opened she had regained her strength. The first meeting was on Thursday, June 27, at 6:00 A.M. She was present and bore her testimony. The camp meeting site was three miles from the city of Salem. Loughborough described it

as “a grove of about thirty fir trees of 150 feet in height, interspersed with those of smaller growth” ([The Signs of the Times, July 4, 1878](#)). There was a nice contrast among the green foliage, the white tents, and the yellow carpet of straw on the ground. By Friday, in addition to the two large tents for men and women, respectively, there were twenty-four family tents arranged in a semicircle around the large preaching tent—[Ibid., July 18, 1878](#)

Given a Vision While Speaking

At the nine o’clock devotional meeting Friday morning, she was the speaker. Compared with others, it was a rather small camp meeting, and in her heart there was a sense of intimacy with the congregation. She sensed the blessing of God resting on her in great measure. While she was speaking to the people, a very brief but reassuring vision was given to her, of which she wrote to James:

My mind was for a moment carried to Battle Creek. I spoke of my husband, his work and present affliction. He seemed to be distinctly pictured before me with a divine light above and around him, his countenance expressing peace and inexpressible happiness. I shall never forget this sight presented to my imagination, for I know that God had a care for His servant and His love was toward him, His everlasting arms beneath him.—[Letter 40, 1878](#).

With this vision her heart was at rest. But on the part of her husband and children and the leading brethren in Battle Creek, there was considerable concern for her, especially after receiving her letter describing the ocean trip and sickness, suffering, and weakness. Unbeknown to her, at sunset on Friday evenings, her husband, her family, S. N. Haskell, D. M. Canright, and the Battle Creek church were taking her case to the throne of grace. “Please unite with us,” James wrote to his wife. “God will hear us pray, and let us live to act some humble part in His great work.”—[JW to EGW, June 25, 1878](#). “Don’t be worried about me, for I am doing well.”—[The Signs of the Times, June 27, 1878](#).

But back to the vision given while she was speaking that Friday morning. In her account of the experience as given in the *Testimony* article, she wrote first of how James White's "face bore the marks of health, and he was apparently very happy." She described the scope of that very brief vision and just what took place: [87]

His [God's] goodness and glory impressed my mind in a remarkable manner. I was overwhelmed with a sense of His unparalleled mercies and of the work He was doing, not only in Oregon, and in California and Michigan, where our important institutions are located, but also in foreign countries. I can never represent to others the picture that vividly impressed my mind on that occasion.

For a moment the extent of the work came before me, and I lost sight of my surroundings. The occasion and the people I was addressing passed from my mind. The light, the precious light from heaven, was shining in great brilliancy upon those institutions which are engaged in the solemn and elevated work of reflecting the rays of light that heaven has let shine upon them.—[Testimonies for the Church, 4:291](#).

But this was not the only vision given to Ellen White while in Oregon. Of this she wrote:

All through this camp meeting the Lord seemed very near me.... Just before the camp meeting commenced, in the night season, many things were opened to me in vision; but silence was enjoined upon me that I should not mention the matter to anyone at that time. After the meeting closed, I had in the night season another remarkable manifestation of God's power.—[Ibid.](#)

After the Oregon Camp Meeting

On Sunday, people came in droves from the surrounding country. Two thousand people heard subjects relating to the faith and hope of Seventh-day Adventists. At two in the afternoon Ellen White spoke

on her favorite subject for such occasions—true temperance ([Letter 38, 1878](#); [The Review and Herald, July 18, 1878](#)).

[88] The closing service was held Tuesday morning, July 2. Ellen White reported, “Brother [William L.] Raymond was ordained. It was a precious hour with softened hearts.”—[Letter 40, 1878](#). His name will be mentioned again in a chapter reporting other journeys Ellen White took to Oregon.

Sunday afternoon, July 7, she spoke to 250 in the public square in a beautiful grove of evergreens. Her subject was “The Simplicity of Gospel Religion.” “I have been treated with the greatest courtesy and kindness by denominational ministers and people,” she wrote to her husband in Battle Creek. “That bigoted feeling we have had to contend with in the Methodist church [in---] does not exist here to any great extent.”—[Letter 39, 1878](#). She spoke again on Tuesday evening in the Methodist church.

This was really a follow-up appointment, for upon arriving in Oregon, she had been requested to speak on temperance in that church. On the Sunday before the camp meeting she had done so, addressing an unusually large audience. On that same day she had visited the State prison and in a morning service spoke to 150 inmates. “I was surprised to see so fine a company of intelligent men,” she wrote. As her heart went out to the men she talked to them on the love of God and the reward to be given to the final overcomer ([Letter 32, 1878](#)). The warden’s wife (who had been present), when introduced to Ellen White, exclaimed:

I would not have lost this opportunity to hear what I have heard for anything. It was all so clear, so simple, and yet so elevating. Women can do far more than men in speaking to these convicts. They can come straight to their hearts.—[Ibid.](#)

Telling the experience to her husband, Ellen said, “I tried to imagine the youth around me as my boys, and to talk with them from a mother’s heart of love and sympathy.”—[Ibid.](#)

As Ellen White left Oregon, there were three ordained ministers—Van Horn, Raymond, and Alonzo T. Jones—and six licensed

ministers in the conference ([The Signs of the Times, July 18, 1878; Letter 40, 1878](#)).

One family, the Donaldsons, particularly impressed Ellen White. They were new believers and “pillars in the church,” attractive and promising. Their teen-age daughter was eager for a Christian education, and both the family and Ellen White felt that she should attend Battle Creek College. Accordingly, arrangements were made for Edith to accompany Ellen on her return to California en route to Battle Creek. “She is an only daughter,” Ellen wrote James. “I want her to board at our house and receive all the attention she needs.” She described her as “a girl of rare promise,” one they could take into their home and heart as a daughter ([Letter 40, 1878](#)).

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Return to California

With Edith Donaldson, Ellen White boarded the steamer *Idaho* on Wednesday, July 10, bound for San Francisco for a trip that turned out to be not quite as tempestuous as the one going to Oregon. The captain allowed her to keep her porthole open, and she relished the fresh air until a huge wave washed into the cabin, soaking everything. The steward who set things in order closed the porthole, and thus, commented Ellen White, “ended the fresh air I was to have in my stateroom” ([Letter 40a, 1878](#)).

She wrote of the pleasure she received by watching a school of whales, and commented on “these monsters of the deep spouting the water high up from the ocean,” a little diversity in a monotonous journey. She took pleasure in sharing with fellow passengers some of the publications on present truth.

She anticipated remaining in California, pressing on with her writing, visiting the churches, and then attending the California camp meeting, scheduled for mid-September. But on June 27 the General Conference Committee, with her husband as chairman, urged her presence at the forthcoming General Conference session scheduled for early October. She had felt that her presence was unnecessary, but in the face of the formal and urgent request she quickly adjusted her plans to enable her to attend not only the session but some of the Eastern camp meetings as well. Responding on July 27 to a telegram from her husband, she wrote:

When your telegram reached us, we were packed. My appointments had gone to Sacramento and Reno.... I must speak [in the] East if I cross the Plains this fall. I shall attend all the camp meetings I can and shall do my uttermost to arouse the people of God from this stupor and lethargy.... My soul feels to the very depths the necessity of a close walk with God if anything is done to resist and press back the moral darkness that is crowded in everywhere.—[Letter 42, 1878](#).

[90] The next Sunday, July 28, she, Edith Donaldson, and Emma White were on the train headed for the East, with stopovers planned for Reno, Nevada, where J. N. Loughborough was holding an evangelistic effort, and in Colorado, where she was to meet vacationing James and other members of the family.

James White had arrived in Battle Creek on June 5, intending to go into the Sanitarium for a month or two, for rest and to receive treatments ([The Signs of the Times, May 30, 1878](#)). In Battle Creek he found W. C. White and Mary and soon had interviews with them and Dr. John Kellogg. Learning the facts concerning the Sanitarium, he wrote for the *Review*:

We are surprised at the prosperity of the institution. The building is completed and completely furnished. It has capacity sufficient to treat three hundred patients. There are one hundred and twenty here today. The reputation of this institution is such abroad, and especially in this city and State, and the people have such confidence in the integrity of Seventh-day Adventists, that three hundred can be gathered here as well as one hundred.—[The Review and Herald, June 13, 1878](#).

By June 24, James could write to his wife, “I report myself very much improved.”

He found he could employ Willie Cornell to write in shorthand his letters and manuscripts for books and articles. In two days he could do what would take a whole week alone, and he reported that he was doing a great deal of writing. In this letter he assured Ellen

that he had written to her each day since leaving Healdsburg on May 31, except one day. Not all these letters were preserved.

Plans for the Dime Tabernacle

By Thursday, June 27, all three members of the General Conference Committee, S. N. Haskell, D. M. Canright, and James White, were in Battle Creek, and they could hold a meeting. The principal item for study was the “enlargement of the work in all of its departments,” as called for at the special session of the General Conference held in early March, and to devise ways to take advantage of the providential openings.

A second item was the proposition of providing in Battle Creek a more adequate house of worship. Now in late June the General Conference Committee laid plans for the construction of a new building. It authorized the publication in the *Review* of an “Address and Appeal,” setting forth the circumstances under which the committee felt justified calling upon the whole denomination for financial support. The argument was this: The present Battle Creek church was adequate for the local congregation. But the college, which drew in more than four hundred students, and the Sanitarium, capable of housing three hundred guests and calling for fifty employees, threw unusual demands upon the Battle Creek church. Also, a place of adequate size was needed for sessions of the General Conference, with delegates from all the States. [91]

The suggestion was an edifice capable of seating two thousand persons. If this was in the form of a tabernacle rather than a formal church building, it could most likely be constructed for about \$10,000 or less. The cost of materials and labor was at a low point, which would make building at once attractive and possible, but to do so, the churches must rally to the project. The Battle Creek church could be responsible for only half the proposed investment (*Ibid.*, July 4, 1878).

At a meeting of the General Conference Committee held July 3, plans for building were crystallized. There would be an immediate beginning, on the site of the present church, where believers had worshiped for twelve years (*Ibid.*, July 25, 1878). The building

should be capable of seating three thousand persons on special occasions. As to financing the project, the proposal ran:

That the funds to build this house be raised by monthly contributions from any and all persons, men, women, and children, who shall esteem it a pleasure to contribute to such a house.

That the amount of these monthly contributions be ten cents from each contributor....

That these, and all others who can do so, pay one dollar or more each, in advance, during the month of July, 1878....

That the proposed house of worship, on account of the manner of raising funds for it, be called the Dime Tabernacle.—*Ibid.*, July 11, 1878

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The Tithe

Another matter receiving consideration at the time was the basis for calculating the tithe. In 1858, a plan known as “Systematic Benevolence” had been recommended as a means of providing support for the work of the ministry. It called for regular contributions and the tithe. The tithe was to be figured on the basis of the church member’s property holdings. It was thought that property should yield 10 percent income per year, and this amount should be regarded as the amount to be tithed. But more and more, church members were working for pay rather than farming their own land, and Canright and White saw that to ascertain the tithe on the basis of property holdings, namely 1 percent of property values per year, excused those who had incomes other than from property.

Through 1877 and 1878, articles in the *Review* canvassed the subject. Four extended editorials signed J. W. appeared in the *Review* during August and September, 1878 (August 29 to September 19). In these articles James White cited several cases of attitudes toward personal possessions and the support of the cause of God, representing both liberality and stinginess, giving only initials as identification of persons concerned.

Off for a Vacation in Colorado

With plans for building and financing the Dime Tabernacle, and with a move well under way to lead the members of the church to understand their responsibility in the matter of the tithe, James White was ready to leave for Colorado for the long-anticipated few weeks' period of rest and relaxation in the Rocky Mountains. But first there was one more task in Battle Creek, a pleasurable one. It was the baptism of Addie Walling, one of the girls James and Ellen White were caring for and educating. In touching words he presented the situation and its involvements in the *Review* of July 4, 1878, under the heading "Baptism."

Sabbath afternoon, June 29, 1878, we had the pleasure of burying four precious souls by baptism in the Kalamazoo River, at Battle Creek. A large audience gathered at the riverside, where we have probably, during the last thirty years, baptized more than one thousand persons. Not that the Battle Creek church numbers that, but as our General Conference in times past has almost always been held here, and as at such annual meetings there are more or less to be baptized, and as the brethren have usually given us the pleasure of being administrator, we think we have not stated the number too high.

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The next Thursday evening, July 4, at eleven o'clock, James White, accompanied by Canright and Mary White, left for Colorado. William White, who delayed going on account of the promotion of the Dime Tabernacle, expected to join them soon. Ellen hoped that she might also spend some time there on her anticipated journey east (*Ibid.*, July 11, 1878). On reaching Colorado, the traveling party took up residence in their mountain retreat, a cabin at Walling's Mills. This was near Rollinsville, some thirty miles west of Denver and about fifteen miles southwest of Boulder. Mr. Walling operated several sawmills in that general area.

Reports and letters through July and August indicate that James White benefited much from the stay in the mountains. But the time

was not altogether spent in rest. While there he and his companions were able to lend support to an evangelistic series of meetings conducted in Boulder by M. E. Cornell.

Ellen White, accompanied by Emma, Edson's wife, and Edith Donaldson, reached Boulder, Colorado, on August 3. Even before getting to the vacationing family she was pressed into service in a temperance meeting Sunday afternoon in the evangelistic tent. Her address awakened a new interest in the subject, and she was asked to speak again the next Sunday evening on the same topic. The tent was filled that evening with "a very fine congregation." She reported on the results:

My speaking in Boulder City gave a spring to the work and silenced the opposition in a great degree. I speak again next Sunday.—[Letter 43, 1878](#).

As to James White's health, she observed in a letter to Lucinda Hall:

I find Father every way improved. It is cool here all the time.... Father is himself again in almost all things. He is always cheerful.—[Ibid.](#)

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Pressing on to the Eastern Camp Meetings

But her stay with the family in the mountains of Colorado was short-lived. On Tuesday, August 20, with Edith Donaldson as a traveling companion, she was on her way east. She would meet James White again in Battle Creek at the Michigan camp meeting in late September. On a postcard to James she expressed her feelings:

We feel that we will get through all right. I feel that I am in the way of duty, although I am very tired.... I hope you will ...go over to the park and have a pleasant camping trip. You may never have as good a time again to make this trip.—[Letter 45, 1878](#).

She arrived at Battle Creek late Friday, and as she stepped off the railroad car Dr. Kellogg greeted her warmly. Early Sabbath morning

and again Sabbath afternoon many of her old friends called to greet her, and some to visit. Among these were Uriah Smith, Canright, and Professor Sidney Brownsberger. As they talked over situations and needs they decided that Ellen White should go with Smith and Eugene Farnsworth to New England. They would leave for the Ballard Vale, Massachusetts, camp meeting the coming Monday.

When Ellen White wrote to her husband and the children in Colorado late in the day, she not only reported the happenings since arriving in Battle Creek but also gave a bit of advice, and she did it with zest:

We hope you will be cheerful and happy while you are in the mountains. This precious opportunity of being all together as you now are may never come to you again. Make the most of it. Do not regard this time of recreation as a drudgery or a task. Lay aside your work; let the writings go. Go over into the park and see all that you can. Get all the pleasure you can out of this little season. I sometimes fear we do not appreciate these precious opportunities and privileges until they pass, and it is too late.

Father, our writing can be done in the winter. Lay it aside now. Throw off every burden, and be a carefree boy again. Will and Mary, if they stay in the mountains a few weeks longer, should neither study nor write. They should be made happy for this season, that they may be able to look back to this time as a season of unalloyed pleasure.... The few days you now have together, improve. Roam about, camp out, fish, hunt, go to places that you have not seen, rest as you go, and enjoy everything. Then come back to your work fresh and vigorous....

Father needs to be a boy again. Roam all around. Climb the mountain steeps. Ride horseback. Find something new each day to see and enjoy. This will be for Father's health. Do not spend any anxious thought on me. You will see how well I will appear after the camp meetings are over.... Strive to make each other happy.

Then angels will look on and smile, and they will write for you a record that you will not be ashamed to read.—
[Letter 1, 1878.](#)

The next day, Sunday, Ellen White was pressed on short notice, into taking the night meeting in “the mammoth tent” pitched on the grounds of Battle Creek College ([Testimonies for the Church, 4:298](#)). Then, with Mary Abbey as a traveling companion ([Ibid., 4:298](#)), she was off to the camp meetings in Massachusetts and Maine.

The Michigan Camp Meeting

What was billed as “the national camp meeting” was held on the fairgrounds in Battle Creek October 2 to 14, combined with the General Conference session. All reports were to the effect that this was the largest gathering of Seventh-day Adventists ever held ([Ibid., 4:301](#)[The Review and Herald, October 17, 1878](#)). There were 135 tents on the grounds, and of course, because it was held in Battle Creek, many who attended stayed in their own homes. On Sabbath, October 5, 2,500 Sabbathkeepers were on the grounds. Some forty ministers were present, including J. N. Andrews and D. T. Bourdeau from Europe and Loughborough from California.

As to the participation of James and Ellen White, she reported:

The Lord gave me strength to speak to the people nearly every day, and sometimes twice a day. My husband labored very hard. He was present at nearly all the business meetings, and preached almost every day in his usual plain, pointed style.

I did not think I should have strength to speak more than twice or three times during the meeting; but as the meeting progressed, my strength increased. Upon several occasions I stood on my feet four hours, inviting the people forward for prayers. I never felt the special help of God more sensibly than during this meeting. Notwithstanding these labors, I steadily increased in strength. And to the praise of God I here record the fact that I was far better in health at the close of that meeting

than I had been for six months.—[Testimonies for the Church, 4:302](#).

She characterized the meetings as of “solemn power and of the deepest interest,” leading to conversions to the truth; “infidels were convicted, and took their stand under the banner of Prince Immanuel.” “This meeting,” she wrote, “was a decided victory. One hundred and twelve were baptized before its close.”—[Ibid.](#)

The Vision of Wednesday, October 9

A vision of far-reaching consequence was given to Ellen White during this important meeting. She described what took place:

On Wednesday of the second week of the meeting a few of us united in prayer for a sister who was afflicted with despondency. While praying I was greatly blessed. The Lord seemed very near. I was taken off in a vision of God’s glory and shown many things. I then went to meeting, and with a solemn sense of the condition of our people I made brief statements of the things which had been shown me. I have since written out some of these testimonies to individuals, appeals to ministers, and in various other articles given in this book [*Testimony* 28].—[Ibid.](#)

One of the testimonies to individuals, delivered most likely only in oral form, was addressed to James White—a reproof for his course of action just before the combined camp meeting and General Conference session. He and Uriah Smith held conflicting views on the prophecy of the “king of the North” pictured in [Daniel 11](#), and the power presented in [verse 45](#) that would come to his end with none to help him. White, in his Sabbath morning address September 28 in the newly pitched camp-meeting tent, countered Smith’s interpretations. He felt that Smith’s approach, indicating that the world was on the verge of Armageddon, would threaten the strong financial support needed for the rapidly expanding work of the church.

Ellen White’s message to her husband was a reproof for taking [97]

a course that would lead the people to observe differences of opinion among leaders and to lower their confidence in them. For the church leaders to stand in a divided position before the people was hazardous. James White accepted the reproof, but it was one of the most difficult experiences he was called to cope with, for he felt he was doing the right thing. At no time did Ellen White reveal which man was right in the position he held. That was not the issue. The crux of the matter was the importance of leaders presenting a united front before the people.

Chapter 8—(1878-1879) The Winter in Northern Texas

[98]

One action taken at the 1878 General Conference session was a recommendation that a camp meeting be held in Texas during the autumn, when James and Ellen White could attend ([The Review and Herald, October 24, 1878](#)). After consulting R. M. Kilgore, who had just completed a tent meeting at Plano, north of Dallas, James White announced in the *Review and Herald* that a general camp meeting would be held in that community November 12 to 19. This gave the Whites time to assist in the two late camp meetings in Kansas, one near Topeka and the other some 150 miles south, close to Oswego. White reported that Kansas was “increasing her population faster than any other State in the Union.” The people, although generally poor, were “intelligent and ready to read and hear, and investigate the reasons of our faith and hope” ([Ibid., November 21, 1878](#)).

Surveying the field at about the same time, S. N. Haskell conjectured that there was no reason “why Kansas may not be in a short time second to no conference in point of numbers” ([Ibid., November 7, 1878](#)). With people ready to hear and little companies springing up across the State, it is understandable that four camp meetings were held in one season to nurture the new believers ([Ibid., November 21, 1878](#)).

James White could not get away from Battle Creek in time to attend the meeting near Topeka, held October 24 to 29 at a community known then as “Richland,” but Ellen White, accompanied by her daughter-in-law Emma, was there, as well as was Haskell. The camp consisted of seventeen family tents and two large tents, one for meetings and one divided with curtains to accommodate campers. Some of the 150 campers came long distances. One family came two hundred miles in a covered wagon. Each tent had a stove, and the preaching tent had two—on Sabbath morning an inch of snow fell, and the weather was very cold.

[99]

James White and D. T. Bourdeau joined the team at the Sherman camp meeting November 1, the second day of that convocation, held near Oswego. About a hundred believers had come from a widely scattered area. On the grounds were ten family tents and a large number of covered wagons. Of the congregational tents, one was used as a chapel and for prayer meetings; the other was “divided into apartments for families” (*Ibid.*). Among the new believers who assembled at the Sherman meeting were those who questioned the stand of the church on temperance and the gift of prophecy. Close attention was paid to Ellen White’s preaching. Sabbath morning James White “spoke nearly two hours to a tent full of eager listeners on the words: ‘The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy’ ([Revelation 19:10](#))” (*Ibid.*). Tuesday afternoon, the Whites, with Haskell and Emma, were off by train, across the “Indian Territory” (Oklahoma), bound for Dallas, Texas.

At the McDearmon Home

Of their arrival in Texas, James White reported to the readers of the *Review*:

Wednesday [November 6] we reached Dallas, dusty and weary, but glad that our journey of about one thousand miles from Battle Creek, Michigan, to Dallas, Texas, was at an end. We tarried the night at the home of Brother Cole and family, and Thursday came to the good and comfortable home of Brother McDearmon [at Grand Prairie, west of Dallas]. Here our daughter met her parents, brother, and sister, who have all been brought near the door of death by the fever which has prevailed in this State during the past season. Our coming was timely. They have a large house and warm hearts, but as they move about they look more like walking corpses than living men and women.—*Ibid.*

[100] At another time White declared that it would “take two of them to make a shadow” ([Letter 54, 1878](#)). Twenty years earlier the Whites had made the acquaintance of the McDearmons, who were

then living in Michigan. They were in feeble health, but with the acceptance of the health reform principles they rallied. In time, Edson White married one of the daughters, Emma. Seeking to avoid the cold winters of Michigan, the McDearmons moved to northern Texas, and settled in Grand Prairie ([Manuscript 3, 1878](#)).

On this 1878 visit the Whites found the McDearmons destitute and ill. “We tried to help them,” wrote Ellen White.

I gave Sister McDearmon \$40 from my own purse to use for the necessities of life. Father bought bags of flour, a barrel of apples, nuts, sugar, et cetera. He bought one cotton mattress and one husk [mattress] overlaid with cotton. It is seldom I have seen such destitution. I have bought several things for their comfort. Father left McDearmon his fur coat to use, for his blood is so low he cannot bear the least chilliness of the air. We have done what we could for them.—[Letter 54, 1878](#).

The Plano Camp Meeting

After spending a week at the McDearmon home, James and Ellen White went on north some twenty miles to Plano. The camp meeting had opened there, three miles from the village, on Tuesday, November 12. About two hundred believers came in for a very successful camp meeting. From Peoria, about a hundred miles away, nine families came by private conveyance ([Manuscript 3, 1878](#)).

Ellen White pictured the accommodations awaiting her and her party.

We found a tent prepared for us with board floor, and carpeted, provided with bedsteads, tables, chairs, and stove. Nothing was wanting to make us comfortable. Our friends who had recently embraced the truth at Plano had anticipated our wants and liberally supplied them in the furnishing of our tent.—[Ibid.](#)

As to the meetings, wrote James White:

[101]

Twenty-four discourses were preached during the camp meeting. Elder Haskell was on the ground two days in advance and gave eleven discourses. Mrs. White and the writer gave six discourses each, and Elder Kilgore, one. In consequence of the distance, the rains, and deep mud, the outside attendance was small. Sunday afternoon Mrs. White gave a discourse on Christian temperance before a large congregation.—[The Review and Herald, December 5, 1878.](#)

During the camp meeting thirteen people were baptized, the Texas Conference was formed, and aggressive plans were laid for tent evangelism. It was decided to purchase two evangelistic tents, one sixty feet in diameter and the other fifty feet.

The Whites elected to settle for the winter in Denison, some sixty miles to the north of Dallas and not far from the Red River, which forms the boundary for the northeast part of the State. Denison was somewhat of a railroad center, situated on sandy land. Roads were fairly good and the surroundings pleasant.

The Fluctuating Plans of James and Ellen White

As James and Ellen White went to Texas, their general, long-range plans were to remain there for the winter, then in early May travel to Colorado, where they might spend a few weeks ([Ibid., November 21, 1878](#)). But their plans fluctuated. Ever in search of a place where he could lay off the stress of leadership and write without interruptions, and where there could be an improvement of health, James White's mind turned first in one direction and then in another. Forgetful of good resolutions to temper his schedule, he would get caught up in the stimulus of the work of the church, which he had nurtured since its inception. He had a clear, long-range vision, shared only by a few, of the great days the church was entering upon, and had a natural urge to stand in the lead.

He was the president of the General Conference and was one of three who served as the General Conference Committee. He was also president of the several auxiliary organizations—publishing, medical, and educational—and chief editor of both the *Review and*

Herald and the *Signs of the Times*. Such responsibility was exhilarating but enervating as well. Repeatedly he saw that in the interests of his own survival he must withdraw from the forefront of the battle.

At headquarters he was happy, much loved, and respected. But once away from the center of the work, he often chafed at the mistakes and mismanagement of men of less experience and, in the case of some, of less dedication. He tended to fret, and sometimes lashed out in an endeavor to steady the work and avert what seemed to him to be disaster. It was a difficult period for James, and he struggled, as he put it, “to grow old gracefully” (*Ibid.*, May 15, 1879). At this he was more successful at some times than at others. For her part Ellen White would have preferred, in the winter of 1878-1879, to have been in Battle Creek engaged in her writing.

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This sidelight may be helpful in interpreting what at this juncture may seem to be rather erratic movements and statements on James White’s part.

Working at Home in Denison, Texas

In Denison, the Whites were to occupy a home being built by the Bahlers. Just as soon as the plaster was dry they settled down for the winter. They had to secure furniture and furnishings, and assemble materials for their writing. It seems that Ellen White left Battle Creek in such haste that she did not have time or strength to assemble either adequate clothing for the winter or the writing materials and reference works she would need.

The requests she addressed to Willie and Mary included bedding, materials for sewing—patterns for dresses for herself and pants for James—and some food items for the table. But of top priority were materials needed for her writing. Seldom do we get a picture of what she wished to have at hand with her literary work, so mention of particular items as she wrote to Mary is of interest. One paragraph in a letter written November 8 reads:

Send me my feather bed, four pairs of sheets and pillowcases, all made. I need my writings the most. I care more for these than anything else. I want ten scratch books made just as long again as those we have.

The same width will answer. Remember, just as long again as those we have used—fully one-half yard long. This is much more convenient than the small size. I want a supply of foolscap and note and letter paper, and good pencils.

Please get me three of those five-cent coral pins at Skinner's. Please send me two of my calico nightdresses in wardrobe at office.—[Letter 52, 1878](#).

[103] Another paragraph in the same letter also contains specific requests:

Will you please get and mail the covered book *History of Paul*, and put in a red-covered book, *Bible Antiquities*—[a] sort of Bible dictionary. Also send all my writings in [the] secretary in the office and those at home. Look for a page, less or more, of my article on sanctification. I cannot find the end of it. I have a case made purposely for my writings. Send it also. Also my little box of writings. Take special pains to send the books I desire. There is one old book bought in Oakland—*Sermons*; also another book, *Old Worthies of the Old Testament*. You look over my books and send all I shall really need.—[Ibid.](#)

On November 20 she was writing for more materials to be sent. The request discloses the particular lines of work she had in mind—testimonies, and books dealing with some phases of the great controversy story:

Ask Brother Farnsworth in reference to that testimony sent to Iowa. I must have it and a copy of all my testimonies lately written, in manuscript or in pamphlet form in print. Father wants those we had in California.

Whatever is lacking, search for them at the office or please send all the numbers in pamphlet form and the bound volumes.

Also tell Will [WCW] to make no charges for these, as we use these in writing for the benefit of our papers.

Send one copy of each of the three volumes [*Spirit of Prophecy*], for which charge two dollars. Send one copy each of the four volumes of the *Spiritual Gifts*,, for which make no charge. Volumes one and two you will find in one book. Send three or four copies of Henry's life in pamphlet. All my writings. [Also,] all my writings I want for *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 4.

I want all the books I have named to you before. These books and writings had better be sent by Sister Booth, as we shall need them at once. Be particular to get the writing for Elder Bourdeau and all the writings I have left there at home.—[Letter 55, 1878](#).

Writing November 22, she stated, “We intend to commence writing at once and to make the most of our time.”—[Letter 56, 1878](#). And she did. A few days later she wrote to the children in Battle Creek: [104]

We sent an article last night upon missionary labor. Father heard it read before being copied and after it was copied [published in *Review and Herald* of December 12]. I have much personal matter to get off as soon as possible. I am doing my best to get through my writing.—[Letter 58, 1878](#).

Miss Marian Davis Joins the White Forces

Miss Marian Davis, connected with the *Youth's Instructor* staff in Battle Creek, on New Year's Day joined the Whites in Texas to assist them in literary work. At the time she was not well, but she had some of the skills they so much sought. “Marian is just what we need,” Ellen White wrote Willie and Mary a few days later; “she is splendid help.”—[Letter 4, 1879](#). Thus began a close personal and working relationship between the two women that was to continue through the next twenty-five years until Marian's death in 1904.

Now Ellen White was able to forge ahead with the preparation of personal testimonies. She wrote a number stemming from the comprehensive vision in Battle Creek on October 9, 1878; she also

wrote some for publication, based on the same vision. She worked on the manuscript for what was later published as *Bible Sanctification* (see [The Review and Herald, January 18, 1881](#), to [Ibid., May 3, 1881](#); [The Signs of the Times, September 21, 1882](#), to November 30, 1882), and the revision and amplification of materials on early world history to appear in the *Signs*. These latter eventually formed the basis of *Patriarchs and Prophets*. She also pressed on with the preparation of materials for *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 4.

The Home Situation

On January 6, Ellen White wrote to Edson of the home situation:

Father is well, cheerful, and happy. Very kind and tender of me and my comfort. He is very active.—[Letter 3a, 1879](#).

A week later she exclaimed, “I do not know as we ever enjoyed the society of each other as we do now.”—[Letter 5a, 1879](#). As the winter drew to a close she wrote feelingly to William and Mary:

[105]

[Father] is in a good state of mind, willing to be counseled and advised. He is not so determined and set to carry out his ideas. We have had as pleasant and harmonious a winter as we have ever enjoyed in our lives. We feel like walking humbly and carefully before God. We are not perfect. We may err and do and say things that may not be all right, but we hope no one will be injured in any way by our sayings or doings. We are trying to humbly follow in the footprints of our dear Saviour. We need His Spirit and His grace every hour, or we shall make blunders and shall do harm.—[Letter 18, 1879](#).

A letter written by James to Willie in Battle Creek, where at times the latter must have been called upon to cover for some of his father’s erratic moves, reveals a good bit of James’s nature in this difficult period of “growing old gracefully“:

Probably, dear children, I may have erred in some of the sharp things I have written relative to the mistakes of younger heads. It is my nature to retaliate when pressed above measure. I wish I was a better man. I also wish that the members of my good family had not the difficulty, of long standing, of becoming very gifted over my faults as they imagine them to be.—JW to WCW, February 27, 1879.

Outreach in Missionary Endeavor

As the weather mellowed, and it did quickly, James and Ellen White could not refrain from engaging in local evangelistic ministry. They quickly assessed the needs. On December 4, Ellen White, prefixing her appeal to Battle Creek for literature, wrote:

We cannot go in any direction in Texas but we see covered wagons of movers. Some are real nice people. We want a full supply of publications to give them. Thus we may sow beside all waters.—[Letter 58, 1878](#).

And she wrote of an item that had appeared as follows in one of the Dallas newspapers:

“To the editor of the Dallas *Herald*: The undersigned citizens of Dallas city would esteem it a favor if your journal would extend to Elder James White and his most accomplished wife an invitation to lecture in this city. The attendance may not be large, since this is our busiest cotton season, but we have no doubt that an appreciative audience will be present at any appointment that might be made. Respectfully, James B. Simpson, A. H. Sheppard, Thomas Field, W. L. Cabbell, G. Beaumont, and others.”—[Ibid](#).

[106]

The editor complied; he called attention to the item and then declared:

“We cordially comply with their request, and express the hope that even in these busy times an hour may be spared in listening to what the distinguished lecturers may say. It is to be hoped also that Elder White may be induced to build a sanitarium in Dallas similar to the one in Michigan which has attracted such worldwide interest.”—[Ibid.](#)

This invitation took on real significance when two days later they learned the identity of the men who signed the request. Of this she wrote:

Mayor, first; banker, lawyer, ex-Representative to Congress, present Representative in Congress, physician, and many others. We shall go in February when the tent can be pitched and a crowd got out to hear.—[Letter 59, 1878.](#)

Evangelism in Nearby Communities

But first there were the interests nearer their Denison home. The cold weather now past, on weekends they held meetings in nearby communities. On Thursday, February 13, they were off for Dallas, seventy-five miles by carriage. As James White wrote of this to Willie, he described one missionary facet of the trip:

Brother [Arthur] Daniells takes my carriage with trunk and [plans] to sell and canvass in cities and villages by the way. He will take a fine pair of mules for which I paid \$180.... We shall be gone about a week.—
JW to WCW, February 12, 1879.

[107] The 21-year-old Arthur G. Daniells was in Texas at his own expense, assisting R. M. Kilgore in his tent evangelism. He had been lent to James White to assist him as a secretary. Daniells' wife, Mary, was brought into the White home in Denison as cook. Thus began a longstanding acquaintance between the president of the General Conference, the messenger of the Lord, and a young man who in time would himself serve as leader of the church for twenty-one years.

Texas, a Needy Field of Labor

In writing of their mid-February visit to Dallas, Ellen White disclosed their hopes and plans:

Yesterday we bore pointed testimony to the church in Dallas upon the subject of health reform. My husband spoke from the text “Preach the Word.” The Spirit of the Lord was in our midst, softening hearts and breaking up the fallow ground. Many testimonies were borne, and the church encouraged.

We now expect to commence labor here with a tent in about two weeks. We shall also hold meetings in Denison and vicinity. Angels of God are at work impressing souls everywhere, and we want to be at work doing all we can for the Master.—[The Signs of the Times, March 6, 1879](#).

Meetings were held in the Dallas tent from March 7 to 11 (JW to WCW, February 27, 1879). On the eleventh James White reported to Edson and Emma, his wife, “Your mother is having a perfect opening here. The tent is crowded.”

Because of the promise to pitch the tent in Denison for a short series of meetings to run from March 14 to 19, they could not remain as long in Dallas as might seem desirable ([Letter 45, 1879](#)). Two conflicting elements were at work that had a strong bearing on their plans: the desire to be in Battle Creek for a special session of the General Conference, and a caravan journey to Colorado.

Preparing for the Exodus from Texas

As James and Ellen White were in Kansas in November, 1878, en route south, he promised that as they left Texas in early May the next year on their way to Colorado, they would attend a Kansas camp meeting to be held about May 10 ([The Review and Herald, November 21, 1878](#)). In this is seen the embryo of plans that simmered in his mind through the winter. By early March these were taking definite shape. One thing that was clear to the Whites was that some Adventist families in the Dallas area, especially the McDearmons,

should, for the sake of their very survival, move to a more healthful climate. To James White, Colorado seemed to be just the place.

As plans were discussed the interested families increased in number until between twenty and thirty church members were ready to join a sort of exodus from northern Texas. James White would lead this expedition. The early-March trip from Dallas to Denison was a sort of trial run. Ellen White described that two-day trip:

We left Dallas last Wednesday morning [March 19] with two heavy wagons, loaded, two two-seated wagons called “hacks,” and our phaeton, Brother McDearmon and family and goods. We were moving on to Denison. We had our large family tent and pitched it and for two nights occupied it. Fifteen composed our caravan: Elder Kilgore and his brother Scott, Brother and Sister McDearmon—their two children, Hattie and Joseph—their niece Nettie Cole, and grandson Homer Salisbury, Brother Moore and his son Willie, Brother and Sister Daniells, Sister [Marian] Davis, Brother and Sister White.

We found that Brother and Sister McDearmon and family endured the journey much better than they feared. They will go through with the company to Colorado. I believe that they will enjoy good health there. We arrived at home in Denison before the Sabbath and were well arranged before sundown.—[Letter 45, 1879](#).

To provide transportation for some of the families that had been reduced to poverty, James White bought or traded teams of horses and mules, upgrading them step by step. He figured these could be used to travel to Colorado and then, when the caravan reached Walling’s Mills, near Boulder, could be sold at a profit.

Chapter 9—(1879) From the Red River to Battle Creek

[109]

We have started on our journey to Colorado,” wrote James White from their camp to children William and Mary. They were midway between Denison and the Red River, which separated Texas from the Indian Territory (Oklahoma). It was Sabbath, April 26, and the campers had been reading the *Review*, *Good Health*, and the *Youth’s Instructor*. The *Review*, which reported the General Conference session and the dedication of the Tabernacle, he commented, “is excellent.” In a Sabbath morning walk with John Corliss they came across ripe wild strawberries, and the quails around them were chirping, “Good-to-eat” or “Bobwhite.” White explained their encampment:

Rains have detained us in getting off, and now the river is so high that we have to wait here till Monday the twenty-seventh. Elder Corliss, Brother Bears and daughter, Dr. Hardin, M. A. [Marian] Davis, and your parents came out here last evening, and just before the Sabbath were pitched in two tents. We have four heavy mules on two wagons, and a fine span of smaller ones on our two-seated spring carriage.—JW to WCW, April 26, 1879.

Concerning the same camp Ellen White wrote in her diary:

We remained until [Wednesday] April 30 in a waiting position, for the sick to be able to travel [W. H. Moore, from food poisoning, having eaten some partly decomposed bear meat, and James Cornell. Moore was desperately ill, and even when well enough to travel at all, did so for some days on a mattress in one of the covered wagons.] and the ferry so that we could

[110]

cross. We then started on our way with eight covered wagons and one covered spring wagon with two seats. Thirty composed our party. About noon we crossed the ferry with special instruction to drive quickly as soon as off the boat because of danger through quicksands.—[Manuscript 4, 1879](#).

The caravan pushed north into Indian Territory for five miles; as night came on, they made camp in the open prairie. Besides the covered wagons their equipment included three tents, two cookstoves, and a sheet-iron camp stove.

Camping in Indian Territory

The circumstances called for special precautions against Indian raiders, either on the Indians' own initiative or inspired by lawless white settlers. Tents were pitched, but before they were fully prepared, a severe storm struck. Ellen White described the experience in a letter to the children in Battle Creek:

Before the tent was trenched, the beds were made on the ground and on the bedstead. When the storm struck us we were found unprepared and in ten minutes there were several inches of water in the tent. We got the two girls up and placed the bed and bedding on our own bedstead, and such a mess as we were in.

After a time we decided, all four of us—Marian [Davis], Adelia Cole, Etta Bears, and myself—to sleep crossways on the bed and [that] Father [would] lodge with the doctor in the wagon, Corliss in our carriage. Thus we returned to rest.... The next night we lodged the same way.—[Letter 20a, 1879](#).

Their route took them through heavy woods. Observed Ellen White in her diary:

It seemed very lonesome journeying in the thick forest. We thought what might be if robbers or horse thieves—Indians or white men—should molest us,

but we had a vigilant watch guarding the animals.—
[Manuscript 4, 1879](#).

The precautions they took were in line with what was generally followed in like circumstances. The wagons were placed in a circle surrounding the horses and mules; two men carrying guns stood guard in two-hour shifts ([Letter 20, 1879](#)). Friday they reached Johnson Ranch and had ample time to prepare for the Sabbath. There was plenty of grass for the horses, and at the farmhouse they purchased “good milk, butter, and eggs” ([Manuscript 4, 1879](#)). They could also catch up with the washing—Ellen White did thirteen towels while Marian prepared the food for the Sabbath ([Letter 20, 1879](#)). She commented: [111]

We were having our first experience of overland journeying in transporting our sick and those too poor to pay car [railway] expenses, but the Lord cared for us.—[Manuscript 4, 1879](#).

Sunday morning they were on their way again. As they camped for the night at a place referred to as Stone Wall, she reported to the children at Battle Creek:

We have reached thus far on our journey to Colorado. We have traveled four days. Rested yesterday. Spoke under our tent to our party of thirty-one. Was very free in speaking. Today we picked nearly a quart of strawberries. I have just gathered a large bundle of greens to cook for our breakfast. While Father is buying water buckets and cornmeal, I am writing.

Father rides horseback a considerable part of the time. He is enjoying the journey much.... We are in sight of a meetinghouse. We are now being urged to speak in the Indian Territory. We shall ride out, camp, and then return to meet with the people. We will thus work our way along, preaching as we go. I will finish this tomorrow morning.... Last night I spoke to one hundred people assembled in a respectable meetinghouse. We find here an excellent class of people....

I had great freedom in presenting before them the love of God evidenced to man in the gift of His Son. All listened with the deepest interest. The Baptist minister arose and said we had heard the gospel that night and he hoped all would heed the words spoken.—[Letter 36, 1879](#).

James White also spoke a short time, and the Whites were urged to remain and hold more meetings, but this could not be, for they needed to press on. It was a mile and a half back to the camp, but the success of the meeting warmed their hearts.

[112]

The Caravan Divides

At some point as they journeyed north, the Whites, accompanied by eight or ten of the group, broke away from the caravan to hasten on to Emporia, Kansas, for the camp meeting they had promised to attend; the rest turned west en route to Boulder.

While James White reveled in the venture, Ellen did not. She and Marian carried the burden of housekeeping and of providing the meals for their part of the traveling group, Marian often working late into the night with inconvenient camping equipment. There was another point that perplexed Ellen White—was all this necessary and in the line of duty? No doubt it was with some hyperbole that she wrote to the children in Battle Creek:

I had rather attend twenty camp meetings with all their wear, knowing I was doing good to souls, than to be here traveling through the country. The scenery is beautiful, the changes and variety enjoyable; but I have so many fears that I am not in the line of my duty. Oh, when will this fearful perplexity end? ...God hangs a mist over my eyes.—[Letter 20a, 1879](#).

Erratic Movements and Shifting Plans

While she did not mention it in her correspondence or diary, the rather erratic movements of her husband in shifting his plans relating

to the special session of the General Conference and the dedication of the Tabernacle unquestionably added to her perplexity.

White had called the session through the *Review* of March 6. Two weeks later, March 20, S. N. Haskell, who resided in Battle Creek and was one of the three members of the General Conference Committee, had presented to the readers of the *Review* the several compelling reasons for the special session. He noted that “there has been no time within the past twenty-five years when it could be more truthfully said than now that ‘we have reached a very interesting and important period in the history of the third angel’s message.’ ...The object of the coming conference is to consider what steps should be taken to cooperate with the providence of God as it leads the way before His people.”—[The Review and Herald, March 20, 1879](#).

But then James White had decided not to attend the session because he and his wife could not be there at the time appointed. He had followed that with a message in the *Review* that in the interests of “growing old gracefully” and the fear of impairment of health and the possibility of another stroke of paralysis, they must be excused from going to Battle Creek—and all of this before ever leaving Texas.

[113]

This was indeed most perplexing to Ellen, to Willie and Mary in Battle Creek, and to the people generally. His unusual and out-of-character concern for his well-being apparently had led to his sudden change of plans. He pointed out that men who carry heavy burdens come to a time when they must transfer these to the shoulders of others. He stated:

To Grow Old Gracefully

Here comes in the careful study of every discreet man when to begin to lay off the burdens, and how fast; or, to learn to grow old gracefully.

The writer has been studying this matter several years. At the age of 20 we put the armor on, and for thirty-eight years ours has been a life of toil, care, perplexity, and sickness much of the time. Our nervous system has been shocked three times with paralysis, and

three times the arm that traces these lines has fallen, for a time to be raised and moved only by the other.

These dangerous attacks have usually occurred after severe mental strain, such as has ever been our portion at General Conference. We were reported absent from the late conference in consequence of ill health. Thanks to that worthy body for the vote of sympathy. It is our duty, however, to state that our absence was through fear of another breakdown.

Both Mrs. White and the writer have important writing to do, books to complete which should be in the hands of the people. If we attend the conferences and camp meetings at the call of our people, we shall never do this work, which is not second to any other.... Thus retired, with the blessing of God, we hope to restore that "lost art" in this fretting generation, of growing old gracefully.—[Ibid., May 20, 1878](#)

But these words, written in sincerity, were soon forgotten.

[114]

Still on the Caravan Trail

The journey from Texas to Colorado by covered wagon seemed to be exhilarating and eminently beneficial. We pick up the account as those in the group heading for the camp meeting at Emporia, Kansas, reached Okmulgee, Indian Territory, on Friday, May 9. They had logged 160 miles since leaving Denison, and were two hundred miles from Emporia. That evening James White was invited to speak in the Indian council house; Ellen White addressed the people the following evening (JW to WCW, May 10, 1879).

He described Okmulgee as the capital of the Creek Nation of Indians and told of how they had "just passed the council building which exceeds most of the county houses of any of the new Western States," and of the people governed by "one hundred councilmen who meet at certain periods." James White outlined his plans:

Here we shall take in some supplies. We shall not go to Coffeyville [Kansas], but keep up to Newton with

the teams, then Elder Corliss, Mother, and I will take the cars east to Emporia. Then at the close of the meetings we will take the cars west to meet the train [caravan bound for Colorado].—*Ibid.*, May 11, 1879

It was not easy for James to recognize that changes in the leadership of the church were inevitable and that others must take on responsibilities as the church grew and his health and strength declined. But he pondered these things as he rode horseback or jogged along in the covered wagon. He felt the need for competent secretarial assistance. “If we have help, we can do our writing and also attend General Conferences and some of the most important camp meetings.”—*Ibid.* He added:

We cannot work as we once could, and shall not undertake it. We have deprived ourselves of being at Battle Creek at General Conference and [Tabernacle] dedication, and take this long, slow journey to save a breakdown and improve in health.... I design to take a humble and more quiet position among my brethren, and move out as the providence of God and my brethren call me out. There was a time, he said, when it was his place to lead, and, where necessary, to storm it through, but now the time had come for him to retire and let younger men come to the front.

[115]

The Special Session in Battle Creek

The special session of the General Conference, held without the presence of James and Ellen White, went off well. D. M. Canright, one of the three members of the General Conference Committee, was chosen to serve as chairman of the five-day meeting.

At the session the interests of the broadening work of the church were considered, and sound progressive actions were taken. Among these were resolutions calling for developments in the newly introduced health and temperance thrust; encouragement in ascertaining the tithe based on income rather than property holdings; the provision for the appointment of a man to deal with foreign mission

interests—and the election of W. C. White to so serve; the usual allocation of ministerial help; broader distribution of the E. G. White books; and provision to republish Ellen White’s first book, *Experience and Views*.

No nominating committee was appointed, because this was not a regular session.

Although the contributions James and Ellen White could make in counsel, advice, and leadership were greatly appreciated by laymen and workers alike, the experience in holding an important conference in which the Whites were not present was constructive and no doubt helped to pave the way for changes that were to come in the next few years.

On to Emporia

By the third Sabbath on their trek, the Whites had reached southeastern Kansas, and Ellen White spoke Sabbath afternoon and evening in a schoolhouse close to where they camped. The meetings were well attended, and she pressed home the subject of temperance and the necessity of self-denial and self-sacrifice in order to preserve physical, mental, and moral health. “I had special freedom in speaking to the people,” she noted in her diary. “The Lord indeed gave me His Spirit and power in speaking the truth and all seemed interested.”—[Manuscript 4, 1879](#).

[116] Sunday night there was a downpour, but their tent was “staked and thoroughly ditched.” The next morning the women in the party washed their clothes in the trenches about the tents. In her diary she wrote:

It is a beautiful morning. The sun is shining and all in camp are astir for breakfast, while some are packing the wagons for another move.

We are on the way again, slowly making our way over the broad prairies of Kansas. At nine o’clock we turned out to let the horses feed on grass. At noon we all drew up upon the broad prairie to take our dinner... Teams are now being prepared for another move, while Marian and I, Adelia and Etta, are gathering up, washing

the dishes, and putting the food in baskets. The order comes, "Move on." In one hour and a half we shall be at Brother Glover's.—[Ibid.](#)

James White had called for the postponement of the Kansas camp meeting for a week beyond the time first announced in the *Review*, but they found the Glovers had left for Emporia, for they had not received the word. This led to a rapid change in plans. With less than an hour's time, the Whites took their two trunks and, without changing from their camping attire, caught the train for Emporia, leaving the rest of the party to continue the journey with the wagons. Ellen White records in her diary the story of arriving in Emporia and driving onto the campground Tuesday morning "in style" ([Letter 20, 1879](#)):

We arrived at Emporia about seven o'clock [in the morning]. We engaged an omnibus to take us to the campground, about two miles. Four powerful horses were put before the bus and we were carried speedily to camp. All seemed glad to meet us. We pitched our tent and one and another brought us a piece of bedding, so we had a passably comfortable bed.—[Manuscript 4, 1879.](#)

They found mail awaiting them there. One letter was from Mary White, to whom the next day her mother-in-law bared her soul:

I have just read your letters and cried like a child.... I suppose I was babyish, but I have been sick the entire journey. Lost twelve pounds. No rest, not a bit of it, for poor Marian and me. We have worked like slaves. We cooked repeatedly half the night. Marian, the entire night....

[117]

I have spoken every Sabbath to our camp because no one else seemed to feel the burden, and every Sabbath evening or Sunday in towns and villages. I am worn and feel as though I was about 100 years old.... My ambition is gone; my strength is gone, but this will not last....

I hope that by the cheering light of the countenance of my Saviour, I shall have the springback power.... I have not had even time to keep a diary or write a letter. Unpack and pack, hurry, cook, set table, has been the order of the day.... Marian astonishes us all. She is really forgetting herself and is efficient help. What I could have done unless she had taken the burden is more than I can tell.—[Letter 20, 1879](#).

Writing to the children on the same day, James White reported that his health was the best it had been in four years (JW to WCW, May 20, 1879).

The Kansas Camp Meeting

The camp meeting opened on Thursday, May 22, and was attended by about three hundred believers ([Manuscript 5, 1879](#)), some thirty of whom drove two hundred miles in their wagons to attend. That day the wagons in the White caravan also drove onto the grounds. The weather was good, and there was a reasonably good attendance of the citizens of Emporia. Ellen White began her ministry the first day, joining her husband and J. O. Corliss. At the request of the General Conference, G. I. Butler was there, and on Friday reinforcements were present from Battle Creek. W. C. White was there in the interests of the Sabbath school work being developed in the State conferences, and Dr. J. H. Kellogg came, representing the health and temperance work and to assist in organizing a Health and Temperance Society in Kansas.

The American Health and Temperance Association had been formed in Battle Creek in January, with the intention of drawing Seventh-day Adventists together in an effective organization promoting both health and temperance. The Kansas camp meeting offered the first opportunity to launch the program in the field.

[118] In his *Review* report, Butler noted that “Sister White bore a very plain testimony to the people, especially on the great subject of health reform, which is regarded so lightly by many. Her instruction was excellent.”—[The Review and Herald, June 12, 1879](#). A week later Dr. Kellogg also referred to the start made in Kansas:

At the recent camp meeting in Kansas, the subject of health and temperance reform was presented so forcibly by Brother and Sister White that a great interest was aroused, which resulted in the formation of a State temperance society there, 109 names being taken on the ground.—[Ibid., June 19, 1879](#)

For two years or more, Ellen White's addresses to the Sunday afternoon crowds at camp meetings were along temperance lines. What took place in Kansas and then throughout the land in the formation of health and temperance societies through the camp meeting season of 1879 were but a natural development. The camp meeting held in southern Missouri followed immediately the Kansas meeting, with much the same staff of workers leading out. Dr. Kellogg gave this report in the *Review*:

At the Missouri meeting, the subject was again presented, and with still greater success.... A society of 132 members being organized, including two thirds of all the persons on the ground, and nearly all the adults.

Kellogg added that plans for the formation of State and local organizations were now perfected, and he expected that soon every State would have its health and temperance society, and every church its health and temperance club.

In his report Butler told of the Sunday morning meeting, when a strong effort was made in behalf of the health reform and the temperance cause. He noted:

Sister White had pointed reproofs for us because of our backslidden condition on this subject. She spoke very solemnly, and represented our condition as being grievous in the sight of God, because we have not made better use of the light we have had.—[Ibid.](#)

The next morning those attending the camp meeting formed the temperance association. "A precious meeting," Butler wrote of it, a meeting in which "the Lord's Spirit was present, and many were deeply affected."

James White had planned that, after spending a few days at the Kansas camp meeting, he and his party would turn west and rejoin the wagon train bound for Colorado. Instead, they were persuaded to press on east and attend the Missouri meeting, and then head for Battle Creek.

James and Ellen White had vowed to avoid camp meetings, but having attended two, they now had the camp meeting fever in their systems. How quickly were forgotten the bold declarations of not attending camp meetings. Their trip to Colorado was postponed. The business of the disposal of the teams of horses and mules and ponies in Colorado was left to others. To James White it was an easy and quick switch, and to Ellen White the end of a perplexing experience.

Wednesday afternoon, June 4, 1879, James and Ellen White lighted from the train in Battle Creek, having made the trip overnight from Missouri. The note in the *Review* announcing their arrival remarked on the good degree of health and strength James White evidenced. He spoke in the Tabernacle at the commencement of the Sabbath, June 6, and again Sabbath morning and afternoon.

Sunday evening both James and Ellen White spoke in the Tabernacle to a large congregation at a temperance rally, and the "teetotal pledge" was circulated and signed. On Wednesday evening another temperance meeting was held. The next morning they were off for camp meetings in the West (*Ibid.*). These included meetings in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, and Dakota. The latter, their sixth camp meeting of the season, was followed with the long-looked-forward-to break, a quick visit to the nearby mountains of Colorado, which gave opportunity for nearly four weeks' change. Letters written from there bear such datelines as Boulder, White's Ranch, and Rollinsville, and report evangelistic work in these places.

The Eastern Camp Meetings

[120] Through these weeks James and Ellen White had their eyes on the camp meeting scheduled for Ballard Vale, Massachusetts, to open Wednesday, August 27. But when they returned to Battle Creek, they found that they could slip down for the weekend to the Ohio meeting, being held near Mansfield. Accompanied by W. C.

White and his wife, they arrived late Friday afternoon and were joyfully received by D. M. Canright, president of the conference, and by the entire camp. Sabbath morning three hundred joined in the model Sabbath school held in the big tent. These were days of a marked development in the Sabbath school program in the State conferences. The September 4 *Review and Herald* reported that “Sister White spoke for a little while on the great importance of the Sabbath school work, in her usually forcible and eloquent manner.”

Home Again in Battle Creek

James White had determined that he and his wife would attend but one camp meeting in 1879, for he anticipated they would devote their time to writing as they resided comfortably in their little cabin on “White’s Ranch” in the mountains of Colorado. As it turned out, they attended more than ten such gatherings. The adjusted summer program allowed them but a few days at their newly acquired Colorado home. Now back in Battle Creek at the close of the camp meeting season, James White in early October reviewed the situation and reported:

In many respects Mrs. White’s general health is in advance of what it was a year ago, and the writer is able to report better health than for several years. God is good.—[Ibid., October 9, 1879](#)

[121]

Chapter 10—(1879) Surging to a High Point in Ministry

Unlike other years when the heavy round of camp meetings left James and Ellen White almost completely exhausted and debilitated, labor in the camp meetings they attended in 1879 seemed to energize them for a broadening outreach. This is seen in the comprehensive plans in which they had a part in formulating for the annual session of the General Conference to come in early November, together with its accompanying meetings of the various auxiliary organizations.

In James White's absence the regular General Conference session had been scheduled for a time other than the general camp meeting in Michigan, with its large attendance. The reason given for the change was that some felt that the conference business detracted from the spiritual meetings. White did not disguise his unhappiness at this. He saw the large attendance at collective meetings as vital to a vibrant thrust of the denomination. He explained:

As our people and our work are practical, all the friends of the cause should be encouraged to take a lively interest in all branches of the work discussed at our business meetings. Our general meetings should therefore be held at such places, and at such times, as will secure general attendance....

However much we may regret that the old plan, proved to be successful in the days of our prosperity, is exchanged this year by those who desire the benefits of a new experience, it is very probable that experience may convince them that changes are not always improvements.—[Ibid., October 16, 1879](#)

[122]

But he had another proposal, to serve somewhat as a remedy:

We have urged the necessity of a Biblical institute, to be held with the series of meetings on the occasion of the

General Conference and the several society meetings, as the means of calling together at Battle Creek many of our ministers and those who have the ministry in view.—[Ibid.](#)

The Bible institute would open on October 22, the General Conference session on November 7. Meetings would be held in the Tabernacle.

The Solemn Vision of the Judgment

Wednesday evening, October 22, at the opening meeting of the Bible institute, James White spoke. He spoke again Thursday evening. The opening article of *Testimony* No. 29, published shortly thereafter, presents an account of what took place early Thursday morning:

On the morning of October 23, 1879, about two o'clock, the Spirit of the Lord rested upon me, and I beheld scenes in the coming judgment. Language fails me in which to give an adequate description of the things which passed before me and of the effect they had upon my mind.

The great day of the execution of God's judgment seemed to have come. Ten thousand times ten thousand were assembled before a large throne, upon which was seated a person of majestic appearance. Several books were before Him, and upon the covers of each was written in letters of gold, which seemed like a burning flame of fire: "Ledger of Heaven."

One of these books, containing the names of those who claim to believe the truth, was then opened. Immediately I lost sight of the countless millions about the throne, and only those who were professedly children of the light and of the truth engaged my attention. As these persons were named, one by one, and their good deeds mentioned, their countenances would light up with a holy joy that was reflected in every direction. But this

did not seem to rest upon my mind with the greatest force.

[123]

Another book was opened, wherein were recorded the *sins* of those who profess the truth. Under the general heading of selfishness came every other sin. There were also headings over every column, and underneath these, opposite each name, were recorded, in their respective columns, the lesser sins.—[Testimonies for the Church, 4:384, 385.](#)

The account continues with a vivid portrayal of the reaction of those who stood before the throne, as their names were mentioned and they heard the solemn words of the Judge.

Little wonder that at the beginning of the Sabbath the next evening, as it is reported, “Sister White spoke ...to a full congregation, on the solemnities of the judgment.” No mention is made in the *Review* of the vision, for it was still the policy of the journal to minimize reference to the visions and focus the attention of the readers on the Word of God. It is stated:

Our attention was called to the unerring records of those books which will be opened, from which everyone will be judged according to his works. With great power she urged upon all the importance of making the record on the side of devotion and consecration.—[The Review and Herald, October 30, 1879.](#)

In this setting the Bible institute got under way, and the General Conference session and other important meetings were launched a few days later. The counsels and warnings given by Ellen White through the next few weeks had their basis largely in this vision, and formed the content of a number of testimonies published shortly thereafter. These are now found in *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 4, commencing with page 384.

Encouraging View Involving James White

The account of the vision as it appears in *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White* brings to view James White, his fidelity and experience:

Upon one page of the ledger, under the head of “Fidelity,” was the name of my husband. His life, character, and all the incidents of our experience, seemed to be brought vividly before my mind. A very few items which impressed me, I will mention.

I was shown that God had qualified my husband for a specific work.... Through the testimonies of His Spirit, He had imparted to him great light. He had cautioned, warned, reproved, and encouraged; and it was due to the power of His grace that we had been enabled to bear a part in the work from its very commencement. God had miraculously preserved his mental faculties, notwithstanding his physical powers had given out again and again.—[Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 242, 243.](#)

[124]

Then Ellen White enters into some phases of his experience and leadership that may have vexed some of his associates:

God should have the glory for the unbending integrity and noble courage to vindicate the right and condemn the wrong which my husband has had. Just such firmness and decision were necessary at the commencement of the work, and they have been needed all along, as it progressed step by step.

He has stood in defense of the truth without yielding a single principle to please the best friend. He has had an ardent temperament, bold and fearless in acting and speaking. This has often led him into difficulties which he might frequently have avoided. He has been obliged to stand more firmly, to be more decided, to speak more earnestly and boldly, because of the very different temperament of the men connected with him in his labor.

God has given him the power to form and execute plans with the needed firmness, because he did not refuse to exercise these qualities of the mind, and to venture in order to advance the work of God.

Self has at times been mingled with the work; but when the Holy Spirit has controlled his mind, he has been a most successful instrument in the hands of God for the upbuilding of His cause.

He has had elevated views of the Lord's claims upon all who profess His name—of their duty to stand in defense of the widow and the fatherless, to be kind to the poor, to help the needy. He would jealously guard the interests of his brethren, that no unjust advantage be taken of them.

[125]

The earnest efforts of my husband to build up the institutions in our midst I also saw registered in the Ledger of Heaven.—*Ibid.*, 243, 244. No doubt the words of encouragement that came to James White as the result of this vision strengthened him as he stepped into the harness and pushed ahead in the great cause with which he was connected.

Eighteenth Annual General Conference Session

Friday morning, November 7, 1879, thirty-three delegates from sixteen conferences assembled in the Tabernacle for the opening of the eighteenth annual General Conference session. In a few days twenty conferences and two missions were represented by thirty-nine delegates. At the third meeting held the afternoon of November 10, the nominating committee presented its report:

For president, Elder James White. For secretary, Elder Uriah Smith. For treasurer, Mrs. M. J. Chapman. For executive committee: Elder James White, Elder S. N. Haskell, and Elder George I. Butler.

The report was adopted, with each name considered separately.

The program of the session was varied from day to day, with meetings of the associations and societies interspersed with the regular business sessions. The delegates considered the progress and welfare of the cause in America and overseas. An action calling for a Missionary Board seconded the initial steps taken in the special

session in April, a committee of nine was elected, and W. C. White was chosen as the secretary. This board was to act under the advice of the General Conference Committee and to report annually.

Ellen White was an active participant in the activities of the session, and according to the minutes, when the members of the Missionary Board were elected Ellen White made “some very stirring remarks on the subject of missionary work” ([The Review and Herald, December 4, 1879](#)).

In all, eighteen meetings were held during the session between November 7 and December 1, with numerous far-reaching actions passed. One such action related to the responsibility of ministers in instructing new converts. It read:

Resolved, That it should not be considered that any minister has fully discharged his duty in any new field where a company of Sabbathkeepers has been raised up, until he has fully advocated, in public and in private, the subjects of health and temperance and spiritual gifts, and organized systematic benevolence; and a failure in this should be considered worthy of censure; and the Auditing Committee should take this into account when settling with him.—[Ibid., November 20, 1879](#)

[126]

Another action, this one involving James and Ellen White, was rather sweeping:

Resolved, That this conference cordially invite our beloved brother and sister, Elder James White and wife, so far as possible, and consistent with their many other duties, to attend one general meeting in each conference annually, that the benefit of their great experience and their verbal testimonies may be enjoyed in all parts of the great field.—[Ibid.](#)

As James White was in the chair at the time this action was passed, it seems clear that his devotion to the cause must have overpowered his good judgment.

At another meeting an action that would ease their work was presented and passed. With the preamble it reads:

The Committee on Resolutions were instructed to convey to Sister White the sympathy of the conference in her work, and also to consider by what means both Brother and Sister White can be provided with better facilities for accomplishing the work they have in hand.—
[Ibid., December 4, 1879](#)

The session appointed a committee to consider the matter of a more extensive circulation of the writings of Mrs. E. G. White. On the morning of November 25 its report was presented and accepted:

Whereas, Our past experience has fully proved that our prosperity as a people is always in proportion to the degree of confidence we cherish in the work of the Spirit of Prophecy in our midst; and ..

Whereas, We have found that the most effectual way to meet and disarm this opposition is either to secure the personal labors of the one through whom we believe that the Lord has spoken, or to freely circulate her writings, and

[127] *Whereas*, Great light has shone upon us through this channel, which not only our own people greatly need, but which would be a blessing to the world, remove prejudice, and break the force of the bitter attacks of the enemies of the truth, therefore

Resolved, That we urge upon our ministers and tract societies the importance of making earnest efforts to extend the circulation of the volumes of the *Spirit of Prophecy* and the *Testimonies for the Church* among our own people, till these shall be in every family of believers.

Resolved, That we recommend the [SDA] Publishing Association to issue in attractive form such of her writings as would be of general interest to the reading public who are not of our faith, to be placed in public libraries, reading rooms, on shipboard, et cetera, by canvassers and Tract and Missionary Society workers

where they, as well as our other standard works, may be accessible to the people.—[Ibid.](#)

In connection with this sweeping set of resolutions was an action that called for “the publication of a small edition of her earliest writings, now out of print, to bring all her writings within reach of those anxious to obtain them.” This action was met in the publication of *Early Writings* late in 1882.

The Ministerial Institute

Paralleling the General Conference and its auxiliary meetings was the ministerial institute, attended by 112 ministers and ministers-in-training. It was to have opened on October 22, but except for lectures given each evening, the work of the institute proper did not commence until mid-November. James White gave the opening lecture “on the great subject of prophecy, the place it occupies in the divine Word, and its use to the church” ([Ibid.](#)). The plans announced for the institute suggested that “one hour each day be devoted to penmanship, one hour to English grammar, and one hour to rhetoric” ([Ibid., October 23, 1879](#)). One lecture each day would be given by Dr. Kellogg on various phases of health reform, physiology, and hygiene. A class in elocution was also planned, to be taught by a Professor Hamill, of Chicago.

The institute continued until Wednesday, December 3. The *Review and Herald* reported that:

As a whole, it has been a pleasant and encouraging season. Light on many points has been brought out.... A large amount of instruction, especially to ministers, of the most vital importance, has been given. The Lord has greatly helped Brother and Sister White to speak, and has given them His word fruitfully.—[Ibid., December 4, 1879](#)

[128]

The Vision of November 23, 1879

While the institute was still in progress and the last meeting of the General Conference session had not yet been held, Ellen White was favored with another vision. Of this she wrote:

November 23, 1879, some things were shown me in reference to institutions among us and the duties and dangers of those who occupy a leading position in connection with them. I saw that these men have been raised up to do a special work as God's instruments, to be led, guided, and controlled by His Spirit.... This is a dangerous age for any man who has talents which can be of value in the work of God; for Satan is constantly plying his temptations upon such a person.—[Testimonies for the Church, 4:537, 538.](#)

The seventy or more pages that follow are filled with counsel, reproof, admonition, and encouragement, based largely upon this important vision. Coming as it did during the meetings, it formed the basis of several of the earnest discourses given by Ellen White to the ministers and institutional workers. This undoubtedly led to the expression of contrition and loyalty made at the close of the institute and also at the last meeting of the General Conference session:

Whereas, God has again most mercifully and graciously spoken to us as ministers, in words of admonition and reproof through the gift of the Spirit of Prophecy; and

Whereas, These instructions are just and timely, and of the utmost importance in their relation to our future labors and usefulness; therefore

Resolved, That we hereby express our sincere and devout thanksgiving to God that He has not left us in our blindness, as He might justly have done, but has given us another opportunity to overcome, by faithfully pointing out our sins and errors, and teaching us how we may please God and become useful in His cause.

Resolved, That while it is right and proper that we express our thankfulness to God and His servants in this manner, yet the best manner of expressing our gratitude is to faithfully heed the testimony that has been borne to us; and we hereby pledge ourselves to make a most earnest effort to reform on those points wherein we have been shown to be deficient, and to be obedient to the will of God thus graciously made known to us.—[The Review and Herald, December 11, 1879.](#)

A Call for the Publication of the Vision of the View of the Judgment

One of the actions taken at the annual session of the Tract and Missionary Society, at its meeting held November 11, related to the thrilling vision of the judgment given to Ellen White shortly before. The society recommended its early publication.

On December 18, the following notice appeared on the back page of the *Review*:

Testimony for the Church No. 29 will contain about two hundred pages of the most important matter for our people at this time, including the recent wonderful description of the judgment.

It was ready the first week of January, 1880.

Chapter 11—(1880) Difficult Times

The two-hundred-page *Testimony* No. 29 came from the press in early January, 1880. It contained articles on “The Relation of Church Membership,” “Dishonesty in the Church,” “Unscriptural Marriages,” “The Cause at Battle Creek,” et cetera. These were important messages of reproof and correction. Some Adventists in Battle Creek, forgetting that the Lord had declared, “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten” ([Revelation 3:19](#)), and overlooking the appeal “Be zealous therefore, and repent,” reacted negatively and turned to the public press in Battle Creek to express their bitter feelings. The matter was quickly picked up in Lansing, Detroit, and Chicago. The Lansing *Republican* of January 17 reported:

Mrs. Ellen G. White, of Battle Creek, well known in Lansing as an able speaker of the Advent persuasion, is receiving a large amount of criticism on her recent vision, marking out a track in which her people should travel.

The Chicago and Detroit dailies, according to Uriah Smith, resident editor of the *Review and Herald*, were “publishing the most false and unjust statements and insinuation against Sister White and her writings” ([The Review and Herald, January 22, 1880](#)). A Battle Creek “morning daily” went far beyond the limits of reporting, according to Smith. He said they “put in whole paragraphs of their own, and place them in quotation marks as if from the writings of Mrs. White. And again, paragraphs are run together with no indication of any omission, which in the book are on different subjects and fourteen pages apart.”—*Ibid.*

[131] The Battle Creek article asserted that the writings had never before been “presented to the world.” Smith answered this in an article he asked to have published in the *Battle Creek Journal*. It appeared in its issue of January 14, 1880:

Will you allow us space in your journal to say to the public that if they believe what a morning daily is publishing concerning the writings of Mrs. White, they are most grievously imposed upon. It asserts that these writings have never before been “presented to the world.” ...

They have always been free to the public, and many not of our faith have purchased and read them. And those who will look at the record of the proceedings of our late conference will see that steps were taken to give them still greater publicity, as we are persuaded that they inculcate the highest morality, both public and private, the scrupulous practice of which would be vastly to the advantage of both the church and the world.

The notice informed the public that the book under attack could be had both at the Review and Herald office and at F. E. Peaslee’s bookstore in Battle Creek.

The editor of the Lansing *Republican* in his January 17 issue quoted the *Journal*:

I would that all other religious beliefs in Battle Creek were as true to morality as Mrs. White and her adherents. Then we would have no infamous dens of vice, no grog-shops, no tobacco stores, no gambling hells, no air polluted with the fumes of rum and that fell destroyer of man, tobacco.

Seldom did Ellen White turn aside to engage in a defense of her work. This was left to others. In this case, through January and February she and her husband continued to visit and strengthen the churches within driving distance of Battle Creek.

Meeting the Needs of California

J. N. Loughborough had pioneered the work in California and for ten years had given good leadership to the church on the Pacific Coast. In 1878 the General Conference Committee, observing his talents and sensing the needs of the newly opened work in England,

[132] assigned him to that field. However, they did not at the same time make proper provision for the growing work in the West. As a result, that work suffered. Poor management at the Pacific Press put its activities in a precarious position. James and Ellen White had not been in the West since mid-1878. According to a report in the *Review* of February 12, the General Conference Committee, on receiving reports from the brethren on the Pacific Coast, “thought it advisable that S. N. Haskell and W. C. White spend some three months in California.”

Two weeks later it was reported on the back page of the February 26 *Review* that

Elder S. N. Haskell, accompanied by W. C. White and wife, and Mrs. E. G. White, left for California, via the Chicago and Northwestern Railway, the twenty-third. Elder H. and WCW will spend a few months there before their contemplated visit to Europe.

James White remained in the East to care for the many administrative duties he willingly accepted at the General Conference session, to pastor the Battle Creek church, and to push ahead with such publishing interests as the issuance of *Life Sketches of James and Ellen White* and the republication of some of the earliest E. G. White pamphlets and books. As time and strength permitted, he would continue to visit churches in Michigan in the interests of spiritual revival.

The group of workers traveling westward were seven days in making the journey from Battle Creek to Oakland, arriving Sunday, February 29. Ellen White was able to get in some writing en route. In her diary she mentions work on *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 4, and letters that she would send back to Battle Creek.

As she and those with her picked up the threads of the situation in Oakland, she was troubled. Monday morning she noted in her diary:

My heart went up to God for wisdom and judgment to know how to move, how to advise. Important decisions are being made. God help us to decide aright.—
[Manuscript 7, 1880.](#)

The next day she wrote further of the situation:

My heart is heavy, my mind [is] pressed with care and anxiety. The tangled condition of affairs here is distressing.—*Ibid.*

[133]

A little later she declared: “Things here require much thought, deep study, careful management. Everything must move slowly, and time alone will effect permanent changes and will promise prosperity.”—*Letter 19, 1880.*

She entertained deep concern for the publishing house in Oakland. At its opening in 1875, W. C. White had been selected to manage it, a responsibility he carried well for two years, bringing the new institution through with a modest financial gain. Then plans were laid for him to go to Europe and establish a publishing house in Switzerland. He was released from the work on the Pacific Coast to go to Battle Creek College, where he and his wife, Mary, were to gain a working knowledge of French and German. At a meeting attended by neither James nor Ellen White, the California constituency replaced W. C. White by his older brother, Edson, not fully aware of the latter’s weaknesses in financial management.

Edson’s relationship to financial matters had given his parents great concern. His mother had sent him many warnings and admonitions, most of which went unheeded. In spite of his efforts and the counsel of his parents, who were not on the Pacific Coast during most of the time, he floundered, and the Press came close to disaster. Men brought in to help salvage the institution also faltered. Three weeks before taking the train for the West, Ellen White, with divinely inspired insight, wrote to Edson:

In my last vision [November 23, 1879] I was shown that God gave you another trial, let you pass over the ground again. You have had the most favorable position and chance that you will ever have. You could have redeemed your failures of the past, but you have failed, utterly failed. You will never again have as good a chance to become a man of trust and honor....

I will not give my voice to hold you one hour in that office. You have imperiled the office again and

again and it is time you resigned all position there, for your course has proved to others your unfitness to be there.—[Letter 3a, 1880](#).

[134] On his mother's counsel Edson resigned and went to Battle Creek. His brother was again called upon to manage the publishing house. Bringing in W. C. White and Haskell to help salvage the situation meant postponing plans for their going to Europe, but California had to have help.

Ellen G. White Labors in California

Ellen White threw herself into the program of strengthening the church. She spoke the Sabbath after her arrival in Oakland, with the San Francisco members invited to attend.

On one of the weekend trips she was in the Napa Valley attending meetings at St. Helena and Napa. She visited the newly established health institution and reported:

While at St. Helena last week we visited Crystal Springs, where this Health Retreat is located. It is our opinion that a more beautiful spot could not have been selected as an asylum for the sick and weary. A place of greater natural loveliness we have seldom ever seen. High mountains, stretching their peaks upward toward heaven, seem to surround the place, giving evidence to all of the mighty power of the Lord.

No one who sees God in His created works could view these lofty mountains from the piazza of the Retreat without feeling that he is surrounded by the presence of God and covered by the overshadowing of His glory. Peak rising above peak carries the mind instinctively up to Him who set fast the mountains and girded them with His power so that no human might can move them out of their places.—[The Signs of the Times, April 22, 1880](#).

Little did Ellen White at this time dream that her home for the last fifteen years of her life would be within a half-mile of this

institution. But she had to go to meetings in the neighborhood of Fresno, and a camp meeting at Lemoore scheduled for April 22 to May 3. The work in California was in a period of recovery, and James White published the following encouraging report in the May 13 *Review and Herald*:

At no time in the history of the cause upon the Pacific Coast have we had as lively an interest in the work as during the present season. Mrs. White and our son and daughter are there, and news from that part of the wide field is most cheering.

The camp meeting held at Lemoore, California, April 22 to May 3, was one of the deepest interest. Mrs. White has enjoyed great freedom in speaking at many important points in California, and there is a state of general good cheer all over the State. Her labors have been incessant, yet she reports improved health.

[135]

It seems very evident that it was according to the will of God that she should visit the Pacific Coast at this time. And we are laboring under the impression that we are in the line of our duty in remaining at the old post of duty at the present. We may join her in California in autumn.

A singular experience occurred during the Lemoore camp meeting. Ellen White mentioned this in her letter to James written May 2.

What a peaceful hour it was when the Sabbath was welcomed in with its holy sacred hours. Peace was in my soul.... Peace, peace was like a river and the righteousness thereof like the waves of the sea. Why, it seemed that I could feel the presence of heavenly angels upon the encampment.

That night, Brother Eagle was on watch till past twelve; then he was relieved.... It was about midnight, he said, when he saw a man about nine feet high pacing back and forth before our tent. He thought this was

singular and he would come nearer and see if it was an illusion.

He held out his lantern and let it shine full upon the form and he saw a man. His limbs and body could be distinctly seen, but he could not see the face. He kept his eyes fixed upon it; [it] looked like amber, transparent, towering up above the tent....

This man [Brother Eagle] has recently been converted from infidelity. He has had no faith in the visions, has taken Brinkerhoff's paper and read Carver's book and Chandler's; but since hearing me for himself, is convinced that my visions are of God.... He is a man of sound judgment, free from vagaries. All say he is an entirely different man; he is a converted man.—[Letter 27, 1880.](#)

James White East and Ellen White West

[136] In his *Review* report of the state of the cause on the Pacific Coast, James White expressed the conviction that it was best for him to work in the East and his wife in the West. Ellen shared this conviction. She reflected on this in one of her letters to James:

I am rejoiced that you have the blessing of God in your labors. This may be just as the Lord would have it—you doing your work, and I doing my work here. We are evidently both in the way of duty.—[Letter 24, 1880.](#)

Writing from Oakland on April 6, she told James:

Never doubt my love for you. But I find my duty calls me from you sometimes, and I shall be obedient to the call. My influence at times will be more favorable alone than if you are with me. I shall be with you when I can, but in the future we both may have to endure the trial of separation more in our labors than in the past.—[Letter 19, 1800.](#)

At about the same time he wrote to Ellen: “I hope by your good counsel and help of the Lord to avoid any breakdown this spring.”—JW to EGW, April 11, 1880. On May 4 he wrote Willie:

I undertake to do too much work. I shall not deny that I love to work, and am inclined to take too much on my hands.

As the duties he had assumed at the headquarters of the work pressed in upon him, James was inclined to become irritable. He misconstrued things told him or written to him, and at times lashed out at those he felt were not handling their part of the work as they should or were undermining his administration. As the time approaches for a change in leadership in an organization, there are often opportunities for misunderstandings. There is strong evidence that this was taking place in the case of James White. For one who has nurtured an enterprise from its inception, it is often difficult to relinquish the burden.

White was particularly upset by what he supposed was the attitude toward him by some in California, and in his correspondence he made rash and unfortunate statements. Ellen White attempted to temper this by way of letters to him. When he was dealing unevenly with men, preferring some above others, she wrote in her letter of March 25:

One man’s mind and one man’s judgment must not mold the cause of God, for his peculiar, personal feelings may come in to be exercised in various ways and may injure greatly the cause of God....

[137]

Our special preferences should not control our actions in decisions. Here, I have been shown, was your danger. If you take to a man you will be in danger of ruining him by exalting him and doing too much for him. If you dislike him, you will do the very opposite of this, and you imperil souls and mar the work of God.

The angel of God in my last vision presented this to me very distinctly. He pointed to you and said, “Praise not, exalt not, any man. Censure and humiliate no man.

Be cautious in your words, trust not too much to your own judgment, for it is liable to be biased by your feelings. Mar not the work of God by your likes and dislikes. I was shown that you must give respect to the judgment of your brethren while you shall advise and counsel with them.—[Letter 49, 1880](#).

During this rather critical time she wrote significantly:

It would be hard for you to cease being general; nevertheless, you must begin to accustom yourself to this position for your own good spiritually and for the good of the cause of God.—[Letter 53, 1880](#).

In the interchange of correspondence during the five months the pair were separated by half the continent, there were expressions of loneliness and words of encouragement. As she closed her letter written the morning of April 17, she declared:

I am most of the time very happy, very cheerful in God. I miss you at times very much, especially when not engaged heart and soul in active labor.... The call comes, Breakfast; then it is the cars for my journey. Good morning—God bless you with the riches of His grace and lift up daily the health of His countenance is the most earnest prayer of your wife, Ellen.—[Letter 23, 1880](#).

She studied and worked to aid her husband in gaining and maintaining right attitudes and perspectives. On March 18, responding to a letter in which he had expressed his hurt, she wrote in part:

[138]

I know it is natural to wish to be appreciated, and those in California have not all shown appreciation, for I have been shown that this was the case.... But I think you are entirely deceived in thinking that there is great prejudice against you. I have not been able to see or hear one lisp of it yet....

I have been shown that in the future we shall see how closely all our trials were connected with our salvation, and how these light afflictions worked out for us “a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” We shall have enough to praise God for in the future life. We shall thank the Lord for every reproof which taught us our own weakness and our Saviour’s power, patience, and love....

I feel so grateful that the Lord is of tender pity, full of mercy.... I must not let one thought or one feeling arise in my heart against my brethren, for they may be in the sight of God more righteous than I. My feelings must not be stirred. We have battles to fight with ourselves, but we should continually encourage our brethren. We should lay no stumbling blocks in their way, and should cherish only the very kindest feelings toward them. Satan is willing and anxious to tear them down. Let us not unite our forces with his. They have their conflicts and trials. God forbid that we should add one trial to those they have to bear.

Then she spoke of how she determined to relate herself to that special situation she alone must face in her heaven-appointed work of bearing testimonies:

I will write out the testimonies of reproof for anyone and then my feelings shall not be exercised against them. I will look within. I will seek to make my ways in the strength of Jesus perfect before God. And when tempted to feel unkindly or to be suspicious and to find fault, I will put this out of my heart quickly, for the soul temple is surely being desecrated and defiled by Satan. The love that Jesus possessed, it is the duty of us both to welcome and cherish, and to have that charity that thinketh no evil; then our influence will be fragrant as sweet perfume.

Bringing the letter to a close, she urged:

[139] Let us, dear husband, make melody to God in our hearts. Let us not be found accusers of our brethren, for this is the work Satan is engaged in. Let us talk of Jesus and His matchless love.... Let us bring ourselves into harmony with heaven and we will then be in harmony with our brethren and at peace among ourselves. Let us now, both of us, redeem the time.—[Letter 5, 1880](#).

From time to time, in writing to Willie and to Ellen, James reiterated his intention to heed the counsel given to him. His letter to his wife written April 18 is to the point and yields some insights:

You exhort me to throw off responsibilities. This I shall not neglect to do. It is necessary to save my strength and proper balance of mind, that I let others take the responsibilities. But never shall I consent to go here and there, and to do this and that, by the direction of others. When I come to that point, it will be time for me to retire. A retreat is the most skillful part of military action, which you and I should be considering, but we must avoid extremes.

I am considering these things with great care. Whatever the Lord has shown you respecting my duty, take time to write it out carefully and give me the complete idea.... We both see a great deal to do in the line of writing, and our brethren are constantly urging us into the field to speak. In the fear of God, we must take this matter in our own hands, and be our own judges of what we should do and how much.

The Oregon Trip

Two camp meetings were planned for late spring in the North Pacific Conference, which comprised the State of Oregon and the Washington Territory. The first was to be east of the Cascade Mountains at Milton, May 20 to 31; the second, west of the mountains, June 9 to 15, in the vicinity of Salem. “Mrs. E. G. White will be present at both our camp meetings” read the notice in the April 22 issue of the *Signs of the Times*. “It will be a most favorable opportunity for all our brethren and sisters to become acquainted with her, and receive the valuable instruction she is able to give.” After wrestling with the matter of the proposed trip for some days, she wrote to James:

If the Lord places the burden on me I must go, however unpleasant I may regard the matter. I do not want to move one step farther than the Lord shall direct by His Holy Spirit. I fear sometimes it is a cowardly dread of the water that makes me not decide at once to go to Oregon. But I mean not to study my will but the will of God... Oh, I tremble for myself, lest after I have preached to others, "I myself should be a castaway."—[Letter 22, 1880](#).

The Lord did place the burden on her. Three days later she wrote: "I shall go to Oregon the sixth of May—shall remain two months unless I see more clear light."—[Letter 24, 1880](#). She made the trip, accompanied by Mary White and S. N. Haskell. They sailed from San Francisco on the steamer *California*, Thursday, May 6; they arrived at Portland Sunday morning, May 9 ([The Signs of the Times, May 13, 1880](#)), then hastened on up the Columbia River to eastern Oregon and Walla Walla. For a few days she and Haskell held meetings there, speaking Sabbath and Sunday, May 15 and 16. She also spoke in Walla Walla on three nights. This gave her a few days for her writing.

The Milton Camp Meeting in Eastern Oregon

Thursday the camp meeting near Milton opened with tents pitched in "Brother Nichols'" grove. "No pains were spared," reported Haskell, "to make the grounds pleasant and attractive."—[Ibid., June 17, 1880](#). There were forty tents besides covered wagons, accommodating in all more than two hundred persons. On the two Sundays of the meeting, between a thousand and fifteen hundred crowded in. Ellen White participated actively in the various features of the program. A decision was reached at this meeting to divide the Oregon Conference, using the Cascade Range as the boundary. G. W. Colcord, sent by the General Conference to assist in the camp meeting, was elected president. Here Ellen White again met both A. T. Jones and W. L. Raymond, young ministers who would feature in later visits. She continued to push ahead with her writing, Mary

White assisting her and also assisting in the meetings. Of her, Ellen wrote:

She worked very very hard in many ways at the camp meeting, copying, cooking, playing the organ, acting for Willie in the Sabbath school work.—[Letter 32, 1880](#).

[141] The journey back to Portland was by boat, on the Columbia River. Mrs. White felt honored to be assigned to the captain's table for meals ([Ibid.](#))

The Camp Meeting at Salem, Oregon

Haskell's report concerning the meetings in western Oregon read:

We left Milton, Monday, May 31, for western Oregon. Thursday night Sister White spoke to a crowded house at Beaverton; and in Portland, on the evening after the Sabbath, before the Temperance Society in the rooms of the Christian Association. On Sunday she spoke twice in the Methodist chapel. There are about twenty keeping the Sabbath in Portland; these are scattered over the city, and owing to distracting influences in the past, they have not held regular meetings.—[The Signs of the Times, June 24, 1880](#).

The May 6 issue of *Signs* announced concerning the plans for the Western Oregon camp meeting:

It will be held *in the city* of Salem. It is a beautiful location. Marion Square is well set with shade trees, and the whole city will have an opportunity to hear, on the same ground where the truth was first proclaimed there.—[Ibid.](#)

Twenty-five tents were pitched in the square, and the camp meeting opened Wednesday evening, June 9. The townspeople manifested a good interest. Of the closing meeting held on Tuesday evening, Ellen White wrote to Edson and Emma in Battle Creek:

Last night, weak and trembling, I took the stand, but oh, what a solemn sense of the condition of the people and their unprepared state for the judgment—[Letter 32a, 1880](#).

The plan was that she and those with her would leave at once for California, but some of the Methodists who had heard her temperance address Sunday afternoon sent a request for her to speak on the subject in their church. How could she turn down such an “appeal from outsiders, prominent men,” for her to remain over another week ([Ibid.](#))? The meetings in the tent had created a deep interest; prejudice had disappeared. “Now we can do something,” she declared. [142]

Haskell returned to California, but Ellen White and Mary remained for a week to fill the appointment in the Methodist church. She described the meeting in a letter to James:

Sunday evening the Methodist church, a grand building, was well filled. I spoke to about seven hundred people who listened with deep interest. The Methodist minister thanked me for the discourse. The Methodist minister’s wife and all seemed much pleased.—[Letter 33a, 1880](#).

And Ellen was pleased that a number of people remained after the meeting to chat with her. In her letter she said that “one of the Methodist ministers said to Brother Levitt that he regretted Mrs. White was not a staunch Methodist, for they would make her a bishop at once; she could do justice to the office.”—[Ibid.](#) Monday night she and Mary left on the return trip to San Francisco.

Between meetings she was busy writing, particularly for some of the workers in the Northwest. [Her messages of counsel and reproof written there and read to those involved, are found in [Testimonies for the Church, 5:249-289, 298-309.](#)]

Return to Battle Creek (1880)

For several weeks Ellen White labored in northern California, speaking several times in the tent in Chico. In her mind she debated as to whether she should remain in California or return East to attend the later camp meetings. Then she received a letter from James written July 21:

My dear wife, the enclosed is a sample of the appeals that are coming to me for you to attend our camp meeting. Such appeals are coming to me from Maine to Dakota, and from Michigan to Kentucky. I have nothing to say, only that it seems to me that our testimony was never needed so much in the wide field as at the present time.

From Oakland she responded by telegram that she expected to be in Battle Creek August 4. That would be on a Wednesday ([The Review and Herald, July 29, 1880](#)).

[143] With Lucinda Hall she took the train for the trip east on Monday, July 26. Traveling by “slow train”—it cost less—they were nine days on the way, arriving Wednesday noon ([The Signs of the Times, August 26, 1880](#)). Then at eight o’clock she, with her husband, caught the train for a two-hour trip to Jackson. They spent the night at the Palmer home and the next morning were on the train for Alma in central Michigan, arriving just before dark. Both immediately entered into the usual arduous camp meeting labor, Ellen White speaking the night they arrived.

The Eastern Camp Meetings

The next trip took them to the province of Quebec, Canada, where at Magog a camp meeting opened on Thursday, August 12. They did not arrive till Friday evening. White reported the grounds good, the weather fine, and non-Adventist attendance large and orderly ([Ibid., September 2, 1880](#)). About two thousand heard Ellen White’s address on temperance Sunday afternoon. On Tuesday, the last day of the meeting, with a hundred believers present, Elder

White led out in organizing “The Seventh-day Adventist Conference of the Province of Quebec.”

Through the rest of August and September James and Ellen White went week to week, from camp meeting to camp meeting, spending from three to five days at each, but always including Sabbath and Sunday: Waterville, Maine; West Boylston, Massachusetts; Morrisville, Vermont; Hornellsville, New York; Clyde, Ohio; Rochester, Indiana (attended by E. G. White only); and the national camp meeting at Battle Creek, Michigan, October 2 and 9.

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Chapter 12—(1880) The Changing of the Guard

While at the Magog camp meeting in Quebec, James White wrote an item for the *Review*:

It was just fifteen years ago this morning, August 15, 1880, when enjoying our usual morning walk with Mrs. White, that in the act of opening a green ear of corn with the right hand, a stroke of paralysis crippled the hand that now traces these lines, and touched the brain to that degree that we could speak only the word, "Pray." Friends bowed around us in earnest prayer, and immediately the arm was restored to its natural feeling, and the hand and fingers could be moved clumsily.

Each year, during the past fifteen, by the blessing of God, the hand that writes these words has become more natural. This wonderful restoration from paralysis, which came upon us in consequence of excessive labor and care in the cause of truth, has been the work of God in answer to the prayer of His people.

The past fifteen years of our life have been marked with labor, care, and periods of illness and despondency. But God has been gracious. When we have fallen under affliction, His hand has lifted us up. When we have erred in our efforts to advance the cause of truth, the Lord has corrected in love and has reached down His arm to point the way and to sustain. God is good. Christ is worthy of all praise. We are unworthy of the care, love, and mercy of the Lord during the past fifteen years, which enables us to say, to the praise of God, August 15, 1880, we are free from pain and feebleness, and have been able to do as much work during the last, as

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And yet we feel a want of that spiritual life and power which the work of the times demands. We hunger and thirst for righteousness, and claim the promise "Ye shall be filled." Here we consecrate all to the cause of God. Will He accept the poor remnant of life? and permit us to finish our course with joy? Eternity will be none too long to give expression of gratitude for the privilege of laboring on in the work we entered upon in youth.—Aug. 26, 1880

Although he knew it not, James was just entering the last year of his life. He was within a few days of turning 59; Ellen was 52.

It was a time of mellowing for James White, but not always on an even plane. He sensed that he must lay off the burdens of leadership. His sometimes erratic movements and statements, and the light given to Ellen White in vision, as well as her own judgment, indicated clearly that the time had come. And James White tried. He had written to his wife a few weeks earlier:

I shall ...do all I can to please God, please and relieve you, and serve the cause of God. I do not reject your appeals. I am confused. I shall wait, and pray till these matters become clear in my mind.

The next day, July 15, he wrote to Willie:

Where I have erred, help me to be right. I see my mistakes and am trying to rally. I need the help of yourself, Mother, and Haskell.

The experience of attending the eastern camp meetings, in which both James and Ellen White had enjoyed good health, a hearty reception on the part of the people, and God's rich blessing in their ministry, had been exhilarating. At these meetings James White usually spoke Sabbath morning and Ellen White in the afternoon. She often closed her meeting with an altar call; this was followed by a social meeting in which the members bore their testimonies. James White usually spoke Sunday morning on some identifying doctrines of the church. On Sunday afternoon Ellen would usually

[146] present a powerful temperance address to audiences of from one thousand to four or five thousand, for people flocked to the Adventist campgrounds on Sundays.

The reports appearing in the *Review* and the *Signs* frequently mentioned the part Ellen White took in the Sabbath school hour, speaking for fifteen or twenty minutes in a telling presentation of the mission of the Sabbath school, for Sabbath schools were just getting under way. They were well organized and enjoyed general acceptance.

Several times in her letters Ellen White referred to a special burden she and she alone carried through some of these meetings, something from which she could seldom escape:

I have had many individual testimonies to write which has been quite a heavy burden on me in addition to my labors in talking the truth.—[Letter 41, 1880](#).

She made reference to this work in a letter to Willie and Mary in California, reporting on the Vermont meeting:

Friday night I bore my testimony with great power. It seemed to cut everything before it that night. Brother Stone was nearly all night in prayer in the grove, and Sabbath morning he made a most humble confession. I assure you there was a break in the camp.... We indeed had the best meeting we ever had in Vermont.

I had some very bad, bad jobs to perform. I took Brother Bean and wife and talked to them very plain. They did not rise up against it. I cried myself, could not help it.—[Letter 42, 1880](#).

But she could report, “Every camp meeting has been good. Father has labored well and has been very pleasant. I am satisfied it was my duty to come east. We have attended six camp meetings.”—[Letter 41, 1880](#). When she wrote this several meetings were yet ahead; the season would close with the national camp meeting in Michigan, accompanied by the General Conference session. Nearly all published accounts of the camp meetings reported that each had the largest attendance ever.

Potentially Difficult Times

As the time neared for the General Conference session with its election of officers and committees, the White household experienced some tense moments. James was trying to divest himself of responsibilities. Two weeks before the session opened Ellen wrote to the children in California: [147]

Father at times seems to be seeing himself, then he will rouse up and make his stand, but I shall keep straight if God will help me.—[Letter 41, 1880.](#)

She declared that she had “stood firm as a rock to principle.” In her next letter, mailed before leaving Battle Creek for the Indiana camp meeting, she seemed relieved as she wrote:

Father decided to remain and prepare for the camp meeting [and General Conference session held in connection with it]. He seems now to be in an excellent state of mind. While in Ohio we had several earnest and important talks. Also one since we came to Battle Creek.

Father has already sent in his resignation of every office except his connection with the publishing work. I think there will be no disagreeable issue.—[Letter 42, 1880.](#)

The Election of General Conference Officers

The national camp meeting opened on schedule on September 28. The first meeting of the General Conference session was held on Wednesday afternoon, October 6.

As President of the General Conference, James White was in the chair. Twenty delegates were present, and by vote of the conference their number was increased to thirty-eight by drawing in from those present several from conferences who had limited delegations. The appropriate committees were appointed.

Monday morning, October 11, the nominating committee reported with the following recommendations:

For president, George I. Butler. For secretary, Uriah Smith. For treasurer, Mrs. M. J. Chapman. For Conference Committee, G. I. Butler, S. N. Haskell, and H. W. Kellogg.

[148] James White, serving as chairman of the meeting, called for the vote. “The nominees were ...unanimously elected.”—[The Review and Herald, October 14, 1880](#).

There was no issue.

Of the eleven organizations meeting during the session, the name of James White was brought in to head only one—The SDA Publishing Association. The other business of the General Conference session was quite routine, with all the business completed in just four meetings. In reporting the combined camp meeting-General Conference session, Uriah Smith noted:

A few days of serious illness on the part of Sister White, in the midst of the meeting, caused some anxiety and depression for the time on the part of many. But as prayer was offered in her behalf, she was remarkably relieved, and enabled to labor again in her usual strength before the meeting closed.—[Ibid., October 21, 1880](#)

As Ellen White wrote to her children on the Pacific Coast, she gave some interesting details of being healed on Sabbath morning and of her ministry later that day:

I spoke about twenty minutes when strength came to me and the power of God rested upon me and also upon the congregation. This was a great victory. I called them forward and hundreds came seeking the Lord. I am a new woman. God has indeed wrought for me. I also spoke Sunday afternoon to the large crowd.—[Letter 43, 1880](#).

She added, “Father has laid off every responsibility except president of the [SDA] Publishing Association. And he has done it well, too.”—[Ibid.](#)

James and Ellen White Plan for the Future

Now James and Ellen turned their thoughts to the future. On Wednesday, October 14, she wrote:

We are now deciding to spend this winter and next summer in preparing books. First I get articles prepared for *Signs*. 2. I get out articles for private testimony, health institutions. 3. Get out Testimony No. 30. 4. Letters to her children by a mother. 5. [*Spirit of Prophecy*] Volume 4. 6. Life of Christ, both books, the most sharp and interesting matter in one large book for canvassers to use for public sale.

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So you see we have work to do. We dare not go south and will remain here this winter in Michigan. In summer we may go to Colorado. Thus you see how matters stand. Our time now must be in production of books before we get unable to use the pen.—[Letter 43, 1880](#).

They instituted an immediate search for a place to make their home for the year before them. They looked at a three-acre property in Grand Ledge, but it did not suit. The house was run down. “I would rather have occupied our Healdsburg home, much rather,” but it did not seem a good time to go to California. They finally settled on a three-story, well-built brick home on a thirty-acre tract of land between the city of Battle Creek and Goguc Lake, a mile from the city. It could be secured for \$6,000. It stood on a prominence overlooking Battle Creek, and on it was a young orchard of 225 trees—apples, pears, peaches, and cherries (JW to WCW, November 3, 1880)—and an attractive ten-acre oak grove. The 10-year-old house, explained Ellen, had “all the advantages of a country residence.”

First floor has a parlor twelve by twenty-two, most thoroughly finished...; hall and front door, sitting room, twelve by seventeen; kitchen, fifteen by fifteen; buttry, twelve by twelve; bedroom, twelve by twelve. There is a well on the doorsteps one hundred feet deep; a cellar

stoned up and plastered rough all over—an excellent cellar, and an immense cistern....

There is a good barn, and plenty of land to cultivate, pasturage for cow and horses. A living stream runs through one corner of the field for pasture. Now you have our future home.—[Letter 45b, 1880](#).

They moved in on Sunday, December 19. Observing that it would soon be Christmas, Ellen noted in a letter to a friend: “My Christmas will be spent in seeking Jesus to be a welcome guest in my heart. His presence will drive all the shadows away.”—[Letter 51, 1880](#).

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Attending to Literary Work

There was hardly a wasted hour in Ellen White’s life. She learned early that serving as an effectual channel of communication for the Lord called for a total dedication. Often she had weeks and months of diligent work before her, just to convey to individuals the messages the Lord gave her for them. There was also a backlog of articles to be written for the *Review* and the *Signs*, and book preparation. While she was at home she spent almost every moment available in writing, except when she was ill—and this biographical account has minimized reference to such. She wrote on trains and in boats, while traveling by carriage, and sometimes during camp meetings, at a table in front of the pulpit. To introduce in chapter after chapter of this biography the references to her writing would be redundant; the work was, however, always with her.

For instance, in 1879 the *Review* carried eight E. G. White articles, and the *Signs*, fifty-five. The eight in the *Review* represented new material. In the *Signs* some were new materials entirely; a few were reprints of *Review* or earlier *Signs* articles. But the majority constituted the early part of the great controversy story, as given in *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 1, published in 1870. When the articles appeared in the *Signs*, such expressions as “I saw,” et cetera, were left out. She often enlarged the story through new writing. This formed the basis for the later *Patriarchs and Prophets*.

This program continued through 1880, with sixty-six articles of about the same mix. There was also the writing for the last part of the 192-page *Testimony* 28, and *Testimony* 29, of the same size. In 1880 her 19 *Review* articles, many of them drawn from the newly published *Testimonies*, were given front-page status.

While still in Texas in mid-January, 1879, with Marian Davis at hand to assist, she began work on *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 4, work that would continue off and on for the next four years (JW to WCW, January 17, 1879). Early in 1880 she expressed the desire to take the little book *Appeal to Youth*, which was out of print, and enlarge it to include other letters written to Edson and William. She wrote to Edson in California on January 29, 1880, asking him to return by express mail all her letters to him, explaining:

I can then make selections from them which will be for the interest of the book.... I want letters, all letters, as soon as you can conveniently send them. I shall put nothing in the book but that which you would have no objections to.—[Letter 56, 1880](#).

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Life Sketches of Elder James White and His Wife, Mrs. Ellen G. White

Ellen White's rather sudden trip to the West Coast in early 1880 precluded her pursuing her plans for *Appeal to Youth*. In fact, work on the project was delayed almost a year. In the meantime, James White was pulling together the materials for a 416-page volume that would have the extended title *Life Sketches, Ancestry, Early Life, Christian Experience, and Extensive Labors of Elder James White and His Wife, Mrs. Ellen G. White*, usually referred to just as *Life Sketches*, 1880 edition. It was made up of two autobiographical works edited and amplified, the 1868 book *Life Incidents*, by James White, and Ellen White's *Spiritual Gifts*, volume II, specifically entitled *My Christian Experience, Views, and Labors in Connection With the Rise and Progress of the Third Angel's Message*. In the new and enlarged work, 125 pages are given to James White and almost two hundred pages to Ellen White, followed by nearly one hundred pages of material that are "sketches of the rise and progress of the

cause of present truth, presenting a brief history of our publishing work, the tract work, the Sanitarium, and the college” ([The Signs of the Times, July 15, 1880](#)).

The unique volume is described in one of the notices announcing its publication:

Those who do not understand the history of the great Advent Movement from 1843 to the present time cannot fail to be interested and instructed by the reading of this book. It contains the only detailed account of the rise and progress of the work of the Seventh-day Adventists in the third angel’s message.—[Ibid., June 24, 1880](#)

It was one of the first volumes issued by the Review and Herald with illustrations. These consisted of steel engravings of the publishing houses east and west, the college building, Battle Creek Sanitarium, the Tabernacle, and the subjects of the biographical work, James and Ellen White.

[152] With the national camp meeting and the General Conference session over, Ellen White was eager to get to a book that, while it was in preparation, carried the title “Mother’s Influence, or Letters to her Children by a Christian Mother.”

Having just purchased the new brick house and settled in for a winter of writing, she hastened off letters to Oakland. One gave some insights into how she intended to work on a volume that was never finished, as well as other book manuscripts:

We are now very busy in selecting pieces from letters. I am also writing for *Signs*. Mary, will you search carefully all the letters in that small trunk and send me those I may need?

There is a book of mine in the office by Harriet Beecher Stowe, and there are books on mothers’ duties and home influences—anything of this character from which I can intersperse nice selections, with my preface or introduction, [A rather unusual procedure for Ellen White, but one that she employed while furnishing copy over a period of three years in the early 1870’s for what

was titled “Mrs. White’s department” in the health reformer.] in regard to mothers’ duties. You will please send these books of mine that will be an assistance to me.—[Letter 45c, 1880](#).

But her plans for the winter’s work were rudely broken on New Year’s Day. Going by sleigh to a vesper meeting in the Tabernacle, she fell, tearing loose the ligaments in her ankle.

For more than four months she was on crutches, and was quite miserable; her pen largely laid aside. She did fill a speaking appointment at the Tabernacle on Sabbath morning, January 15. Late in March she was able to resume her public ministry with services in the Tabernacle and outlying churches ([The Review and Herald, January 18, 1881](#); [Ibid., April 5, 1881](#); [Ibid., April 12, 1881](#)).

Canright’s 1880 Defection

While Ellen was recovering at their Battle Creek home, James White made a trip to New York City in the interests of securing new printing plates for the engraving “The Way of Life.” He took D. M. Canright with him in an effort to encourage him back into active ministry. Canright was a man whose abilities were much admired by James White and Seventh-day Adventist Church members. He was an energetic and successful evangelist, and more recently called to the presidency of the Ohio Conference; he was a good executive. But in the summer of 1880, feeling that he could reach a higher point of popularity if preaching for some other religious group, Canright faltered, withdrew from the ministry, and for a time even gave up the Sabbath (Carrie Johnson, *I Was Canright’s Secretary*, pp. 56-61). In time, however, as in some similar experience in the past, his counseling with G. I. Butler led him to reexamine the pillars of Seventh-day Adventism and its firm foundation and make himself available again for the ministry.

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James White was pleased with the recovery Canright was making. Writing from New York City to Ellen on February 4, 1881, he reported: “Elder Canright is doing splendid in getting on the track.” On February 17 he reported to W. C. White on the trip mentioned:

“Elder Canright went with me, and I am glad to report him on better ground than ever before.”

White’s confidence in Canright, a man he had long admired, grew rapidly, until within a short time he was a trusted confidant. This was a result, no doubt, of the fact that White’s former associates, not in church leadership, sought his counsel less and less. In fact, in an ill-advised letter to Canright, dated May 24, 1881, James White, after discussing problems, declared:

I want you to unite with me, and in a proper manner, and in the fear of God let us help matters. It is time there was a change in the officers of the General Conference. I trust that if we are true and faithful, the Lord will be pleased that we should constitute two of that board.

However, Ellen White entertained some misgivings concerning Canright, as expressed in a letter to Haskell on June 28, 1881. Discussing camp meeting help, she wrote, “I am really somewhat afraid of Elder Canright’s position.”—[Letter 2, 1881](#).

This was a difficult time for James White, and for Ellen White, who tried desperately to keep things on an even keel.

Chapter 13—(1881) Wrestling With the Problems of Retirement [154]

Although James White was theoretically in agreement with the idea that he should step aside and let others carry the burden of leadership in the church, it was not easy for him to stand back and have no say in what should be done and how. He was distressed when he saw moves made in administrative lines that he felt could result in failure or would injure the cause.

He buried himself in writing and in doing chores on the little farm and about the new home. He still held the position of editor in chief of the *Review and Herald*, and this kept the way open for him to speak to the church each week in reports and editorials. But why, he pondered and fretted, didn't the members of the General Conference Committee consult with him, and why didn't Willie, in Oakland? On the day he bought the new home, and less than a month since the changing of the guard at the General Conference session, Ellen White urged Willie:

Please write to Father. Write freely. Show that you have some confidence in him. He is doing well. Is cheerful and kind. He feels that everything is kept from him by you and Haskell. He has some strong battles with himself.—[Letter 45b, 1880](#).

Two weeks later (November 17), in writing of her husband's experience to Haskell, perhaps the most influential of the three-member General Conference Committee, she said:

I see that his mind on Bible subjects is clear and powerful. His foresight and discrimination on the truth was never better. His health is good. He could never serve the cause better than now if he viewed all things clearly.... He feels that you keep all your matters shut

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up to yourself, and your propositions and plans are to be published without due consideration and consultation. If you could be together to decide your plans, it would be better. If you would show confidence in my husband, it would help him.—[Letter 3, 1880](#).

Moving more in a pastoral role, James White frequently spoke in the Tabernacle. He occasionally baptized new converts and performed marriages. Among these was the marriage of the man to become widely known for his cornflakes, W. K. Kellogg, marrying Ella Davis. She was a sister to Marian, who assisted Ellen White in her literary work.

Ellen's insight penetrated her husband's situation; in writing a message of caution on November 8, 1880, to Haskell, she declared:

The only reason that my husband's influence today is not what God designed it should be is because he was not patient, kind, and was overbearing. Severity and too much dictation became interwoven with his character. You have seen and felt it. Others have felt it.

Then in warning and explanation she continued:

You, my brother, are in danger of failing just where he has failed.... The position of my husband, his age, his affliction, the great work he has done in the cause and work of God, have so fastened him in the affections of his brethren that many things he might say that savor of sharpness would be overlooked in him, that would not be regarded in the same light if spoken by younger ministers.—[Letter 2, 1880](#).

Correspondence reveals that the early months of 1881 continued to be difficult. On April 22 she wrote freely of what she and James were considering: they would drop everything in Battle Creek and go to Colorado, where they could live and work without discouragements. If they were to continue in Michigan and James was to "labor ever so faithfully," she saw as the results:

All he would do would be criticized, and suspicions that had no foundation would be created if he did his best. And I should be held in the very same light by those who are on the doubting side of the Testimonies. I think that the future year's labor would be lost....

Now we shall leave for Colorado in a few weeks. I feel powerless to try to help anywhere. My husband's course, you well know, I have had no sympathy with. But at the same time if I speak the very things shown, it might appear that I was favoring his ideas. I feel sad, hedged in completely, and I will go away.... He has injured his influence, and if he goes now, others will take some responsibilities in regard to Battle Creek to set things in order....

As things now stand we can do nothing. We will take our things away. If James remains here he will take more or less responsibilities and he will become entangled in matters and things that he cannot help.—
[Letter 1, 1881.](#)

But the proposed trip did not materialize. For Ellen it continued to be an almost prostrating situation. On April 19 she wrote to the children in the West:

I cannot see any way to help matters here at Battle Creek. I will not afflict my soul so much that I cannot do anything. I just wait and pray, doing my work in humbleness of mind and in quietness of spirit and say little about things. I have increased courage as I do this....

I dare not give counsel, even to my brethren. It is a perilous time. There was never such a state of things as now in Battle Creek. But we may be brought still lower before God will reach down His arm to lift us up. We need to feel and sense our weakness and feel our great need of help from God before help will come.

When one poor mortal will try to stand under heavy burdens as though he must carry them or everything

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perish, he will be crushed under them and find, after all, God did not want him to make himself the burden-bearer. But when we lay these burdens upon Jesus and then do what little we can in His strength and not feel that everything depends on us, we can keep serenity of mind, calmness of spirit, and shall be in a condition to do much more effective service.—[Letter 3b, 1881](#).

James found satisfaction in visiting and mingling with the members. These loved and respected him, and were less concerned than the leaders in Battle Creek with his sometimes erratic movements. With the aid of Addie and May Walling, Ellen kept house in the big brick home and did a little writing. On a few occasions, as her ankle recovered from the accident, she accompanied her husband on his visits to nearby churches and to one or two weekend tent meetings he arranged for ([The Review and Herald, June 7, 1881](#)).

Concern for Edson

Ellen White felt considerable anxiety for Edson. He had returned from Oakland to Battle Creek, purchased a modest home, and was devoting his time to Sabbath school work, with which he was officially connected. She feared for his negative influence, for it seems he had not become any more responsible financially than when he was managing the publishing house in Oakland. In one letter to him, written April 22, 1881, she made it clear that the counsels and cautions given to him in her letters did not originate with her but from a higher source, the Lord Himself:

Now, Edson, will you please read over the cautions given you of the Lord. Do not think your mother deceived and too cautious, exaggerating matters. I know your dangers; I know the power of habit upon you.... I thought your first anxiety would be to get out of debt....

Now, my son, consider the warnings given you of God. Are these to be set aside and wholly disregarded? ...I beg of you, for your mother's reputation, for your wife's sake, and for Christ's sake, to develop more caution and economy of character. I have felt bad to see the

testimonies of caution and reproof have so little weight with you. Your failures in the past were in consequence of indulging your own ideas and plans just as you are doing now, without moving safely and surely. ...

God is bringing you over the ground again, testing, proving you. Will you withstand temptation and, as tried gold, endure the test?—[Letter 3a, 1881](#).

With the coming of spring she was eager to get out into the flower beds. She wrote to Mary in Oakland: “I have a favor to ask of you. Will you get a small box and put in it small pink roots and slips, a few choice rose cuttings, fuchsia, and geraniums, and send [it to] me?”—[Letter 3b, 1881](#). Still waiting for the package she hoped Mary would send, she wrote on May 15: [158]

We have the most beautiful situation in Michigan.... I have been gathering up shrubs and flowers until we have quite a garden. Peonies, I have a large number of them; hope to get California pinks. I want to get some of that green bordering we get from Sister Rollin.... I wish I had some seeds from California.—[Letter 4a, 1881](#).

It was a joy to Ellen White to be sufficiently recovered to be able to tend the garden a bit and to get back to her writing.

The 1881 Camp Meetings After All

Although James White had given word in the Review when the camp meeting season opened that “Mrs. White is not in a condition of health to go the rounds of camp meetings as in year past” ([The Review and Herald, May 24, 1881](#)), she did consent to make an attempt to attend the early Michigan camp meeting at Spring Arbor, some fifty miles east of Battle Creek, near Jackson. It opened on Wednesday, June 1, but Ellen White, pressed for breath and feeling too ill to go into a series of meetings, stopped off with an Adventist family near the campgrounds. Early Sabbath morning James went to the grounds alone. Of her experience that day she wrote Willie and Mary in Oakland:

I knelt with Brother Weed's family and felt that God indited prayer. I importuned the Lord for help, for light, for strength to bear my testimony to the people of God. Light came. I went upon the ground and spoke to a large congregation with great power and clearness. I endured the effort. Sunday I spoke in the afternoon upon temperance and was so much encouraged that I left appointment for evening and spoke in the evening.—
[Letter 5a, 1881.](#)

[159] James reported that at that evening meeting his wife addressed the people “with clearness, point, and power, probably equal to any effort of her life” ([The Review and Herald, June 7, 1881](#)). Tuesday morning the deep impression came to her distinctly, “Go to Iowa; I have a work for you to do.” The Iowa camp meeting would open on Thursday. “I should as soon have thought of going to Europe,” she commented, “but I told your father my convictions, that I should go with him or alone. He seemed surprised and said, ‘We will go.’”—[Letter 5a, 1881.](#)

The camp meeting was to be held at Des Moines, opening Thursday, June 9. James and Ellen White arrived about noon on Friday. G. B. Starr, a young minister at the meeting, told of how on arrival Ellen White declared, “Well, we are here at the Lord's bidding, for what special purpose we do not know, but we shall doubtless know as the meeting progresses.”—In DF 274, “The Des Moines, Iowa, Temperance Experience.” Both James and Ellen White threw themselves wholeheartedly into ministry, with Ellen White speaking several times, but particularly on Sunday afternoon addressing the people with “great freedom.”

A heavy rainstorm came up, calling for extra effort on her part to make the people hear. Following the meeting she went to her tent, bathed, and retired early for the night. She reported what then transpired:

In one hour, a message came for me to repair to the tent and speak to some points introduced in their business meetings, upon the right of voting in favor of

prohibition. I dressed and spoke to them about twenty minutes, and then returned to the tent.—[Letter 5, 1881](#).

The issue under discussion was on the matter of voting for prohibition. Twenty-six years later, G. B. Starr, laboring in Australia, was confronted with a similar question. He called to mind how Ellen White, at the Iowa meeting, related a dream in which she seemed to be in a large gathering where the temperance movement was being discussed. A fine-looking man with pen in hand was circulating a temperance pledge, but none would sign. As the visitor was leaving, he turned and said:

God designs to help the people in a great movement on this subject. He also designed that you, as a people, should be the head and not the tail in the movement; but now the position you have taken will place you at the tail.—In DF 274, “The Des Moines, Iowa, Temperance Experience.”

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“‘Shall we vote for prohibition?’ she asked. ‘Yes, to a man, everywhere,’ she replied, ‘and perhaps I shall shock some of you if I say, If necessary, vote on the Sabbath day for prohibition if you cannot at any other time.’”—Ibid.

Writing of the experience—in an account Ellen White endorsed—Starr declared:

I can testify that the effect of the relation of that dream was electrical upon the whole conference. A convincing power attended it, and I saw for the first time the unifying power of the gift of prophecy in the church.—Ibid.

Before the Whites came onto the grounds in Iowa, an action had been taken at the business meeting, leaving out the words “by vote.” Apparently Ellen White’s Sunday afternoon address—which, if it ran true to form, was on temperance—led to a reopening of the question, and the call upon Ellen White for counsel. The action, passed after she gave counsel, read:

Resolved, That we express our deep interest in the temperance movement now going forward in this State; and that we instruct all our ministers to use their influence among our churches and with the people at large to induce them to put forth every consistent effort, by personal labor, and at the ballot box, in favor of the prohibitory amendment of the Constitution, which the friends of temperance are seeking to secure.—[The Review and Herald, July 5, 1881](#).

From Iowa, James and Ellen White went to the Wisconsin camp meeting. It was their plan to attend the Minnesota meeting also, but division of feelings between Butler and Haskell on the one hand, and James White on the other, led the Whites to withdraw instead and hasten back from Wisconsin to Battle Creek. It had been Ellen's hope that as she and James attended these camp meetings there could be a drawing together and reconciliation.

[161] There was another matter that also gave her deep concern. This was that the two leading men in the General Conference were doing little to exert a right influence on the Sanitarium, which she mentioned as being “managed by one man's mind and one man's judgment” and that man veering from the “light God has given” ([Letter 8, 1881](#)). Taking the several situations into account, she wrote Butler and Haskell, expressing her distress and concern:

The little interest that has been manifested to see eye to eye by the leaders terrifies me. If God can sanction this lack of harmony, then He has never spoken by me.—[Ibid.](#)

The enervating experiences through which she was passing did not, however, deter Ellen White in her usual writing. “I am now settled,” she told Haskell, “and have begun to complete volume 4, *Spirit of Prophecy*. I have great freedom in writing and great freedom in speaking to the people.”—[Letter 2, 1881](#).

A Significant Dream

It must have been at about this time that she had a significant dream. Its symbolism is most interesting. She wrote of it thus:

I had a dream. I saw Dr. Kellogg in close conversation with men and with ministers. He adroitly would make statements born of suspicion and imagination to draw them out, and then would gain expression from them, while I saw him clap his hands over something very eagerly. I felt a pang of anguish at heart as I saw this going on.

I saw in my dream yourself [probably Haskell] and Elder Butler in conversation with him. You made statements to him which he seemed to grasp with avidity, and close his hand over something in it. I then saw him go to his room, and there upon the floor was a pile of stones systematically laid up, stone upon stone. He placed the additional stones on the pile and counted them up. Every stone had a name—some report gathered up—and every stone was numbered.

The young man who often instructs me came and looked upon the pile of stones with grief and indignation, and inquired what he had and what he purposed to do with them. The doctor looked up with a sharp, gratified laugh. "These are the mistakes of Elder White. I am going to stone him with them, stone him to death."

The young man said, "You are bringing back the stoning system, are you? You are worse than the ancient Pharisees. Who gave you this work to do? The Lord raised you up, the Lord entrusted you with a special work. The Lord has sustained you in a most remarkable manner, but it was not for you to degrade your powers for this kind of work. Satan is an accuser of the brethren."

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I thought the doctor seemed very defiant and determined. Said he, "Elder White is trying to tear us to pieces. He is working against us, and to save our

reputation and life, we must work against him. I shall use every stone to the last pebble here upon this floor to kill him. This is only self-defense, a disagreeable necessity.”

And then said the young man solemnly, “What have you gained? Have you in the act righted your wrongs? Have you opened your heart to Jesus Christ, and does He sit there enthroned? Who occupies the citadel of the soul under this administration of the stoning system?”

...

I then saw my husband engaged in a similar work, gathering stones, making a pile and ready to begin the stoning system. Similar words were repeated to him with additional injunctions, and I awoke.—[Manuscript 2, 1880](#).

Times of Contemplation and Dedication

Through late June and into July, James and Ellen White continued their ministry in Battle Creek—James, through his editorials and back-page notes in the *Review*, Ellen, with her writing; the two united in efforts in the Battle Creek Tabernacle church. Often they repaired to the grove near their home for seasons of prayer. One particular occasion Ellen White especially remembered:

While walking to the usual place for prayer, he stopped abruptly; his face was very pale, and he said, “A deep solemnity is upon my spirit. I am not discouraged, but I feel that some change is about to take place in affairs that concern myself and you. What if you should not live? Oh, this cannot be! God has a work for you to do.... It continues so long that I feel much anxiety as to the result. I feel a sense of danger, and with it comes an unutterable longing for the special blessing of God, an assurance that all my sins are washed away by the blood of Christ. I confess my errors, and ask your forgiveness for any word or act that has caused you sorrow. There must be nothing to hinder our prayers. Everything must

be right between us, and between ourselves and God.”—[Manuscript 6, 1881](#) (see also *In Memoriam. A Sketch of the Last Sickness and Death of Elder James White*, p. 47).

On one occasion, as Ellen White urged her husband to seek a field of labor where he would be released from the burdens that came to him in Battle Creek, he spoke of various matters that required attention before they could leave, duties that someone must do. Then with deep feeling he inquired:

“Where are the men to do this work? Where are those who will have an unselfish interest in our institutions, and who will stand for the right, unaffected by any influence with which they may come in contact?”—[In Memoriam: A Sketch of the Last Sickness and Death of Elder James White, 45.](#)

With tears he expressed his anxiety for the institutions in Battle Creek. He said:

“My life has been given to the upbuilding of these institutions. It seems like death to leave them. They are as my children, and I cannot separate my interest from them. These institutions are the Lord’s instrumentalities to do a specific work. Satan seeks to hinder and defeat every means by which the Lord is working for the salvation of men. If the great adversary can mold these institutions according to the world’s standard, his object is gained. It is my greatest anxiety to have the right men in the right place. If those who stand in responsible positions are weak in moral power, and vacillating in principle, inclined to lead toward the world, there are enough who will be led. Evil influences must not prevail. I would rather die than live to see these institutions mismanaged, or turned aside from the purpose for which they were brought into existence.”—[Ibid.](#)

[164] Uriah Smith, resident editor of the *Review and Herald* and James White's closest associate in the work of the church, had labored at his side for nearly three decades. Smith was well aware of the bruising conflicts; indeed, they had been out in the open for a year or two. He viewed the situation in the light of White's total dedication to the cause of God. Understandingly he declared:

Some have thought that he was deficient in social qualities, and sometimes rigid, harsh, and unjust, even toward his best friends. But these feelings, we are persuaded, come from a failure to comprehend one of the strongest traits in his character, which was his preeminent love for the cause in which he was engaged. To that he subordinated all else; for that he was willing to renounce home and friends.

No man would have been more glad than he to enjoy continuously the pleasures of domestic and social life, and the intercourse of friends, had he not thought that integrity to the cause called him to take a different course. But when this was the case, the voice of duty was first and all else was secondary. Some in whose natures this principle is lacking cannot comprehend the actions of a man who is governed by such motives. But how would any man be fitted, without such an element as this in his character, to be conservator of the interests of any cause whatever?—*Ibid.*, 34, 35.

On July 8, Ellen White wrote nine pages in defense of her husband, reviewing some history to set the record straight.

An Overwhelming Burden for Battle Creek

Suffering from the excessive heat of the summer, early in July Ellen White proposed to seek a climate where she could work to better advantage, most likely Colorado ([The Review and Herald, July 19, 1881](#)). Then a sense of the condition of the cause in Battle Creek, and especially of the youth, rolled upon her with such force that she gave up any plan to leave. She determined to devote her strength to the work there. Smith states:

On making this decision, she felt at once a marked return of bodily and mental vigor, giving good evidence that this determination was in the line of duty.—[Ibid.](#)

Taking the lead, she spoke in the Tabernacle on Thursday evening, July 14, and again Friday evening. She also took the Sabbath services both morning and afternoon. “The Lord gave me a message for the people,” she wrote to William and Mary in Oakland. “They were stirred.”—[Letter 8a, 1881.](#) [165]

She mentioned what, under the circumstances, must have been a significant meeting that most likely took place late Sabbath afternoon, July 16, or the evening after the Sabbath. Of this she said, “I read a large number of pages to Dr. Kellogg and Father.” Just what she read and said is not disclosed, but no doubt she told of the dream wherein they had gathered stones to be used in stoning each other. She gave an interesting account of the momentous week that followed in Battle Creek:

Sunday night I spoke to the office workers. Here I had special freedom. Monday night, meetings again in Tabernacle; Tuesday night I called all the responsible men of church and institutions and read the document I had written expressly for the benefit of Dr. Kellogg and Father; Wednesday night, meeting in Tabernacle.—[Ibid.](#)

As Uriah Smith brought to a close his *Review and Herald* report of the good work done in Battle Creek, he exclaimed:

Oh, that all might be enabled to heed the good words of counsel and admonition! Then would the spirit of religion revive in all our hearts, and the cause of Christ would flourish in our midst.—[The Review and Herald, July 19, 1881.](#)

Ellen White gave an account of her personal experience in a letter to her children in the West:

Up to the time I had commenced this work I was sick, but the Lord gave me strength. I did not get to

rest until near midnight, and labored all through the day, writing. Wednesday night I felt I must have rest. A nervous twitching seized my thumb and I could have no control over it. It jerked continually. I feared paralysis.—[Letter 8a, 1881](#).

The Carriage Trip to Charlotte

[166] An invitation to spend a weekend at Charlotte, thirty miles north-east of Battle Creek, had come to the Whites. A. O. Burrill was holding evangelistic tent meetings there. James was glad that he had given word that he and his wife would drive over, for it would give her the change and rest she needed. The weekend activities were like a camp meeting. James White spoke three times and Ellen four. Many from the community attended the meetings. There was none of the strain of the preceding week in Battle Creek, and Ellen claimed she gained some rest ([The Review and Herald, July 26, 1881](#); [Letter 8a, 1881](#)). Not long after this carriage trip she recalled their conversation as they drove through the countryside:

My husband seemed cheerful, yet a feeling of solemnity rested upon him. He repeatedly praised the Lord for mercies and blessings received, and freely expressed his own feelings concerning the past and the future: ...“The future seems cloudy and uncertain, but the Lord would not have us distressed over these things. When trouble comes, He will give us grace to endure it. What the Lord has been to us, and what He has done for us, should make us so grateful that we would never murmur or complain.

“Our labors, burdens, and sacrifices will never be fully appreciated by all. I see that I have lost my peace of mind and the blessing of God by permitting myself to be troubled by these things. It has seemed hard to me that my motives should be misjudged, and that my best efforts to help, encourage, and strengthen my brethren should again and again be turned against me,

but I should have remembered Jesus and His disappointments....

“Had I ever left all my perplexities with the Lord, thinking less of what others said and did against me, I should have had more peace and joy. I will now seek first to guard myself that I offend not in word or deed, and to help my brethren make straight paths for their feet. I will not stop to mourn over any wrong done to me. I have expected more of men than I ought. I love God and His work, and I love my brethren, also.”—[Manuscript 6, 1881](#) (see also *In Memoriam*, pp. 50, 51).

Returning to their comfortable Battle Creek home on Wednesday, July 27, they picked up their tasks there. One of the first things Ellen White did that day was to write to the children in California of the experience of the past two weeks and of the meeting she and James had with Dr. Kellogg. “I have been alarmed at the state of things,” she wrote, but was glad to add: [167]

I think Father views matters in a different light. In some things I think he is striving hard for the Spirit of God. He seems more humble, more guarded in words and actions. He has a hard battle before him. I shall help him all I can....

I have felt crushed and heartbroken for months, but I have laid my burden on my Saviour and I shall no longer be like a bruised reed.—[Letter 8, 1881](#).

As the new week dawned they were looking forward to more labor in the field. The *Review* of August 2 carried the following back-page note signed by both James and Ellen White:

The Eastern Camp Meetings: We have been urged to attend the camp meetings to be holden at Magog, P.Q. [Province of Quebec], Morrisville, Vermont, and Waterville, Maine. We shall attend these meetings, and others, as the providence of God opens the way for us, and we have health and strength to labor.

But James and Ellen were not at these meetings. Instead, the next issue of the *Review* carried the notice of James White's death.

Chapter 14—(1881) The Tired Warrior at Rest

[168]

On the balmy afternoon of the Sabbath, August 6, quite a large number of solemn-faced Adventists residing in Battle Creek drifted to the grounds of the Sanitarium and milled around the lobby of the main building. They had come to keep vigil for James White. These were his friends, those with whom he had worked, and members of the church he had pastored. They had come knowing that James White, critically ill at the Sanitarium, had just taken a serious turn for the worse. In the early afternoon the report was whispered that he was unconscious and very near death's door. Not a few were seen to furtively wipe away tears. It was all so sudden, so tragic.

Just a week before, they had seen him accompanying his wife to the Tabernacle and join her on the platform. Now, any moment he would breathe his last. They felt they must be near. At five-fifteen, the dreaded word came: James White was dead. The people were stunned.

Some called to mind that just a few days before they had read his editorial in the *Review* carrying the title “Words of Comfort,” dealing with the Christian's hope. In this he asked the question “Is there hope beyond the grave?” Then he cited compelling Scripture evidence that clearly showed that “the hope of the gospel dispels the gloom that enshrouds the grave of the just.”—[The Review and Herald, July 26, 1881](#).

The Last Week of His Life

Very shortly after his death, Ellen White recounted their experience through the last week of his life, beginning with Sabbath, July 30. This was three days after the carriage trip home from Charlotte:

[169]

Sabbath morning, as usual, we walked to the grove together, and my husband prayed most fervently three times. He seemed reluctant to cease pleading with God for special guidance and blessing. His prayers were

heard, and peace and light came to our hearts. My husband praised the Lord, and said, "Now I give it all up to Jesus. I feel a sweet, heavenly peace, an assurance that the Lord will show us our duty; for we desire to do His will."

He accompanied me to the Tabernacle, and opened the services with singing and prayer. It was the last time he was ever to stand by my side in the pulpit. On Sunday he thought he would be able to attend the Eastern camp meetings, and said the Lord could give him strength, if it was his duty to go.

Monday he had a severe chill. Tuesday he did not rally as expected, but we thought the disease an attack of fever and ague [malaria], and supposed that it would soon yield to treatment.

Tuesday night I was attacked with chills, and was very sick, being unable to sit up on the following day.

Dr. Kellogg then proposed that we both be removed to the Sanitarium, where we could enjoy better facilities for treatment. A mattress was placed in a hack, my husband and myself were laid side by side, for the last time, and thus taken to the Sanitarium.

On Friday my symptoms were more favorable. The doctor then informed me that my husband was inclined to sleep, and that danger was apprehended. I was immediately taken to his room, and as soon as I looked upon his countenance I knew that he was dying.

I tried to arouse him. He understood all that was said to him, and responded to all questions that could be answered by Yes or No, but seemed unable to say more.

When I told him I thought he was dying, he manifested no surprise. I asked if Jesus was precious to him. He said, "Yes, oh, yes."

"Have you no desire to live?" I inquired. He answered, "No."

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We then knelt by his bedside, and I prayed for my husband in that solemn hour. A peaceful expression

rested upon his countenance. I said to him, "Jesus loves you. The everlasting arms are beneath you." He responded, "Yes, yes."

I wished to be certain that he recognized us, and I asked him to tell who we were. He said, "You are Ellen. You"—looking at our elder son—"are Edson. I know you all."

Brother Smith and other brethren then prayed around his bedside, and retired to spend much of the night in prayer. My husband said he felt no pain; but he was evidently failing fast. Dr. Kellogg and his helpers did all that was in their power to hold him back from death. He slowly revived, but continued very weak. I remained with him through the night.

The next morning he took some nourishment, and seemed slightly to revive. About noon he had a chill, which left him unconscious, and he quietly breathed his life away, without a struggle or a groan. I was mercifully spared the anguish of seeing my husband in agony battling with death. The scene was as pleasant as it was possible for a deathbed to be.—[Manuscript 6, 1881](#) (see also *In Memoriam*, pp. 52-54).

Dr. J. H. Kellogg, who attended James White through this week, gave an account of the case in the *Review*:

I first learned of the illness of Brother White about 4:00 P.M., Tuesday, August 2, when I received a message from him requesting me to visit him at his residence, which I immediately did. I found him suffering with a very high fever, the pulse being 112, and the temperature 103 3/4 degrees F. I learned that about 10:00 A.M. of the same day he had suffered with a very severe congestive chill.

At this time his head was greatly congested, and he complained of severe pain in the spine, extending into the lower limbs. He seemed to be greatly prostrated, and was very restless. Treatment to relieve the fever

and pain was immediately ordered, and administered by a bath attendant from the Sanitarium. After a short time copious perspiration appeared, and he was greatly relieved.

[171]

At 8:00 P.M. I saw him again, and found his pulse diminished to 96, and his temperature to 101 degrees F. At 11:30 P.M. his fever had entirely subsided.—[Ibid.](#), [August 9, 1881](#)

The case seemed to follow the rather familiar course of malarial fever, with elevated temperature in the afternoons. On Wednesday evening he was taken to the Sanitarium for treatment, accompanied by his wife. Kellogg picks up the account:

About noon on Thursday he began to show symptoms of fever again.... The pulse was rather weak, however, and in the evening, after the fever had subsided, became for a short time very rapid. He slept well through the night, however, and in the morning stated that he felt much better, though weak. He ate a light breakfast with relish, and expressed himself as feeling very comfortable and wholly free from pain during the forenoon, but took no dinner.—[Ibid.](#)

There was some fever on Friday afternoon, and he was inclined to doze much of the time. Dr. Kellogg called in as a consultant a Dr. Millspaugh, one of Battle Creek's leading physicians. He was in full agreement with the diagnosis and favored the treatment administered.

Friday evening some friends called, but talked only a little, as James White was inclined to sleep. His pulse was slightly irregular. Dr. Kellogg administered "strong stimulants," and Ellen White and a number of special friends were advised that his condition was critical. Kellogg continued:

The grave symptoms grew rapidly worse for an hour, notwithstanding the most vigorous efforts which could be made by the use of stimulating and restorative means

of every sort, which were ready at hand. The pulse became exceedingly rapid, reaching 160, and was very feeble and extremely irregular. The respiration was short and labored. The pupils were dilated almost to the extreme limit. Still the body was warm, and there was no evidence of chilliness, but the tendency to collapse from failure of the heart seemed irresistible. Consciousness was not entirely suspended, as he was able to answer any brief question intelligently.—*Ibid.*

In the early-morning hours of Sabbath he improved slightly. After some sleep he took a little fluid nourishment and improved for several hours. Thus it was till a little past the noon hour. Dr. Kellogg reported on the events of the afternoon: [172]

About 1:00 P.M. his pulse suddenly began to increase in frequency, and soon became very feeble and irregular. Within thirty minutes he became unconscious, and his pulse rapidly rose to 176, and his respiration to 60 per minute. His temperature was 99 degrees F., one-half degree above the normal temperature. The same measures used with the previous attack were again employed, but without effect, and he remained in the condition described until he breathed his last, just after 5:00 P.M....

The case presented some strange and very remarkable features, which are only explicable upon the supposition that the severe shocks of apoplexy which he had suffered during the later portion of his life had so seriously impaired certain portions of the brain as to render him unusually susceptible to the malarious poison to which he had been exposed a short time before his death.—*Ibid.*

We return to Ellen White's account of the experience:

At times I felt that I could not have my husband die. But these words seemed to be impressed on my

mind: “Be still, and know that I am God.” ...I keenly feel my loss, but I dare not give myself up to useless grief. This would not bring back my husband. And I am not so selfish as to wish, if I could, to bring him from his peaceful slumber to engage again in the battles of life. Like a tired warrior, he has lain down to sleep. I will look with pleasure upon his resting place. The best way in which I and my children can honor the memory of him who has fallen is to take the work where he left it, and in the strength of Jesus carry it forward to completion.—[Manuscript 6, 1881](#) (see also *In Memoriam*, pp. 54, 55).

That Sabbath afternoon the reality of the situation fully struck Ellen White. Of this she wrote:

[173]

The shock of my husband’s death—so sudden, so unexpected—fell upon me with crushing weight. In my feeble condition I had summoned strength to remain at his bedside to the last; but when I saw his eyes closed in death, exhausted nature gave way, and I was completely prostrated. For some time I seemed balancing between life and death. The vital flame burned so low that a breath might extinguish it. At night my pulse would grow feeble, and my breathing fainter and fainter till it seemed about to cease. Only by the blessing of God and the unremitting care and watchfulness of physician and attendants was my life preserved.—[Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 252](#).

Plans for the funeral called for some delay, for W. C. White and his wife, Mary, were across the continent, almost a week’s travel time away. James’s brother John, for many years a presiding elder of the Methodist Conference in Ohio, was closer, but might need a little time to arrange to come. Another brother, Samuel, a Baptist minister in Massachusetts, was summoned, but was too feeble to come. A sister, Mary Chase, lived with the Whites in Battle Creek.

The funeral was set for Sabbath afternoon, just a week after James’s death. Through the week Ellen White’s health and strength

dipped to an all-time low. John White, coming on Friday and finding her confined to her bed, said:

Ellen, I am deeply sorry to see you so feeble. A trying ordeal is before you in the funeral services of the morrow. God help you, my dear sister, God help you on this occasion.

Said I, Brother John, you do not know me. The more trying the situation, the more fortitude I possess. I shall give way to no outbursts of grief if my heart break. I serve God not impulsively but intelligently. I have a Saviour who will be to me a very present help in time of trouble. I am a Christian. I know in whom I have believed. He expects from me implicit, unwavering submission.

Undue grief is displeasing to God. I take up my appointed cross and will follow the Lord fully. I will not give myself to abandonment of grief. I will not yield to a morbid and melancholy state of feeling. I will not complain or murmur at the providence of God. Jesus is my Saviour. He lives. He will never leave me or forsake me.—[Letter 9, 1881](#).

James White's Funeral

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On Sabbath afternoon, August 13, some 2,500 Seventh-day Adventists and Battle Creek townspeople assembled in the Tabernacle for the funeral of James White. Even though very ill, Ellen attended. She recounted:

We then went in hacks to the Tabernacle, and I was carried in a chair while the mourners followed. I was laid upon a sofa prepared with pillows. I was carefully watched by the doctor.—[Ibid.](#)

The funeral address presented by Uriah Smith was appropriate. In it he eulogized the deceased and spoke of his activities in connection with the origin and rise of the Seventh-day Adventist Church:

Before us, shrouded for the tomb, lies the man with whom it had its very beginning. Taking hold of this work while as yet it had neither form nor substance, under the leadings of what he regarded as the clearest indications of Divine Providence, he bore it in his arms heroically forward, making ways where none appeared, removing obstacles calculated to arrest its progress, defending it from enemies without and within, devising means for the development of strength, until it has reached its present growth, and stands today in its highest attainment of vitality.

With every advance movement, with every new enterprise connected with this work, with all its outreachings to occupy new territory, and with the employment of new agencies to accomplish desired ends, his name has been connected, and his efforts have been inseparably interwoven.—*In Memoriam*, p. 23.

Smith enumerated in some detail, giving illustrations, predominating traits, and characteristics of the man with whom he had worked intimately for so many years:

We first notice that in times of confusion and excitement he was always calm and cool....

Secondly, he was a man never given to fanaticism....

Thirdly, he was endued with remarkable acuteness of perception to determine the most judicious moves to be made....

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Fourthly, he was a man who would never yield to discouragements. The word “fail” was not in his vocabulary....

Fifthly, he was a man who would look forward to the future wants of his work, and make provision for them. He foresaw that certain elements of stability must be wrought into the work, which could be secured only through organization....

Sixthly, he was a man of strong personal friendships, and of a remarkably generous nature. To have a regard for the interest of others, and to see that their circumstances were rendered as favorable as possible, was a part of his nature.—[Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 29-31.](#)

Remarks by Ellen G. White

As Smith concluded his remarks, Ellen White quite unexpectedly arose from her couch to speak to the large audience. She later described the experience:

After Elder Smith had given the funeral discourse I did so long to say something to let all know that the Christian's hope was mine and sustained me in that hour of bereavement, but I feared I could not stand upon my feet. I finally determined to make the trial, and the Lord sustained me. The doctor stood ready to catch me, he said, if I fell.... Brother John and Willie and Edson were also watching to aid me, but I went through with what I had to say with clearness.—[Letter 9, 1881.](#)

“As I arose,” she later declared, “strength was given me, and I spoke about ten minutes, exalting the mercy and love of God in the presence of that crowded assembly.”—[Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 252.](#) Her remarks were stenographically reported. Standing and steadying herself with a hand on the casket, she spoke in a clear voice:

I want to say a few words to those present on this occasion. My dear Saviour has been my strength and support in this time of need. When taken from my sickbed to be with my husband in his dying moments, at first the suddenness of the stroke seemed too heavy to bear, and I cried to God to spare him to me—not to take him away, and leave me to labor alone. Two weeks ago we stood side by side in this desk; but when I shall stand before you again, he will be missing. He will not

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be present to help me then. I shall be alone, and yet not alone, for my Saviour will be with me....

And now I take up my lifework alone. I thank my Saviour I have two sons He has given me to stand by my side. Henceforth the mother must lean upon the children; for the strong, brave, noble-hearted husband is at rest. The turmoil with him is over.

How long I shall fight the battles of life alone I cannot say; but there is one thing that I will say to you, and that is, that when I saw my husband breathe his last, I felt that Jesus was more precious to me than He ever had been in any previous hour in my life.

When I stood by my firstborn and closed his eyes in death, I could say, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord." And I felt then that I had a Comforter in Jesus Christ. And when my little one was torn from my arms, and I could no longer see its little head upon the pillow by my side, then I could say, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

And now he upon whose large affections I have leaned, with whom I have labored—and we have been united in labor for thirty-six years—is taken away; but I can lay my hands upon his eyes and say, I commit my treasure to Thee until the morning of the resurrection.—
In Memoriam, pp. 40-42.

She spoke at length of the Christian's hope and of Jesus, who from henceforth would be her counselor and friend till she would meet her husband in that land "where there is no parting, where there is no separation, and where none shall anymore say, 'I am sick'" (*Ibid.*, 43). The prospects were too bright for the shedding of tears. In closing she remarked:

I look to that morning when the broken family links shall be reunited, and we shall see the King in His beauty, and behold His matchless charms, and cast our glittering crowns at His feet, and touch the golden harp

and fill all heaven with the strains of our music and songs to the Lamb. We will sing together there. We will triumph together around the great white throne.—[Ibid.](#)

Ninety-five carriages joined in the funeral procession to Oak Hill Cemetery; in addition, nearly a hundred people went on foot. White was laid to rest in the family plot, where his two sons and his father and mother, John and Elizabeth White, were buried. [177]

After the funeral Ellen White was taken back to the Sanitarium for the night. On Sunday she was taken on a bed out to their home, where she was joined by the members of the family who had attended the funeral. James's brother John was delighted with the place, but as for Ellen, she declared:

The light of my home had gone and henceforth I should love it for his sake who thought so much of it. It just met his taste.... But how can I ever regard it as I could if he had lived?—[Letter 9, 1881.](#)

The Public Press

James White was known quite well across the land, not only as one of the founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church—a church that had grown to seventeen thousand in his lifetime—but also as an astute businessman managing large publishing interests and closely connected with the educational and medical interests in Battle Creek. He was highly esteemed by the Honorable George Willard, one-time Congressman from the State of Michigan and publisher of the Battle Creek *Daily Journal*. In his editorial on page one of the August 8 issue, Willard eulogized:

He was a man of the patriarchal pattern, and his character was cast in the heroic mold. If the logical clearness to formulate a creed; if the power to infect others with one's own zeal, and impress them with one's own convictions; if the executive ability to establish a sect and to give it form and stability; if the genius to shape and direct the destiny of great communities, be a mark of true greatness, Elder White is certainly entitled

to the appellation, for he possessed not one of these qualities only, but all of them in a marked degree.

The essential feature of his life's work was constructive. He had the rare power of social organization and laid the foundation and marked the design for the erection of a social and religious structure for others to develop and further complete.... As with all true founders of communities, his life is not a broken shaft, but an enduring column, whereon others are to build.

[178] Willard gave fifty-nine inches to James White in the August 8 issue of the *Battle Creek Daily Journal*, reporting his death and presenting a life sketch. The August 15 issue carried the report of the funeral, Uriah Smith's sermon, and Ellen White's statement, in all some eighty column inches. He also republished the full account of the week before, giving this explanation:

The very great demand for copies of the *Journal* containing the account of the life and death of Elder White has induced us to reproduce the articles of last week on the second page of today's issue, while the report of the funeral services and the addresses of Elder Smith and Mrs. White will be found on the last page. We surrender a large portion of our space today to this subject, which is one of general interest.

The public press across the land also gave him favorable notice.

His Associates Unprepared to Take Over

In his funeral sermon Smith made an interesting point.

With every advance movement, with every new enterprise connected with this work, with all its outreachings to occupy new territory, and with the employment of new agencies to accomplish desired ends, his name has been connected, and his efforts have been inseparably interwoven.

Is it strange, then, that we should never have contemplated the coming of a day when others would be obliged to go forward with this work without his active cooperation? Is it any wonder that we should come to feel that in a cause which we have expected would be brief at the longest, he with whom it began, and who has so long continued with it, should continue to the end?—*In Memoriam*, p. 23.

George I. Butler sounded a somewhat similar note as he wistfully wrote just a month after White's death:

We look forward to our next annual General Conference with much interest and anxiety.... The death of Brother White is a sad and startling event to our people generally. He has been regarded by all of us as the leading man in this cause. Our people have felt safe while he was living to counsel and bear burdens. His voice will no more be heard in our councils. He is gone.

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Unquestionably, quite a degree of anxiety prevails among our people as to what course will be taken. Who will bear the general burdens of the cause? Who will act as president of the [SDA] Publishing Association, and exert a leading influence in the college and Sanitarium? What shall be the line of policy adopted? How shall the debts upon our institutions be paid? These and many other questions will occur to the mind of the discerning reader.—[The Review and Herald, September 6, 1881](#).

Butler pointed out that the presence and counsel of Ellen White would be especially needed, and because of his connection with the publishing work at both offices, the presence of W. C. White was essential, as well. In another statement, Butler wrote of James White that he was a natural leader with the courage of a lion, yet manifesting the tenderness of a mother ([Ibid., August 16, 1881](#)).

Of course, many expressed their sense of loss through the columns of the *Review*, particularly Dr. Kellogg, who wrote:

No one, unless it be his bereaved family, can feel more keenly than we the loss of one who had been to us for years a father and a friend. To no one else have we been personally indebted for so many acts of kindness and so much wise counsel. We mourn not only for the irretrievable loss which the cause must sustain, but for a personal loss which cannot be repaired.—[Ibid., August 9, 1881](#)

A Close Call for Ellen White

[180] The day of James White's death came close to being just that for Ellen, also. When on Friday evening Dr. Kellogg advised her that James White was failing fast, she had gotten up from her sickbed. Though seeming to be recovering, she was still very ill. She stayed with James through the night and all the next day till his death. Then she almost collapsed. Dr. Kellogg sensed her danger, although she did not. That night he appointed two attendants, and he himself slept close by with clothes on, so that he might be instantly at her side if needed. He charged the two women helpers, Mary Chinnock and Emma Webber: "Watch the pulse and call me at any change." Not sensing her peril and always thoughtful of others, Ellen White told the two women that they could sleep. But they did not. She wrote of the experience a little later:

At twelve o'clock at night my pulse stopped.... He [Dr. Kellogg] was at my bedside in one minute. I was unable to speak but knew what was going on. I expected to pass away quietly as my husband had done, but the doctor worked unremittingly with the two helpers until three o'clock in the morning.

The strongest electricity was employed; one stood with a cake of ice and another with a hot sponge and passed first hot, then cold, over the spine for three hours until my pulse, though very weak, and fluttery, was improved. For four nights these faithful hands battled with death and were rewarded by seeing a determined improvement.—[Letter 9, 1881.](#)

Chapter 15—(1881-1882) Alone, So Alone—Yet Not Alone [181]

Shortly after the funeral, Uriah Smith employed his editorial column in the August 23 *Review* to inform the church about Ellen White's state of health and her plans for the future. He reported that for the past few days she had gained strength quite rapidly. She spoke to church members in the Tabernacle Sabbath afternoon, August 20, for fifty minutes, "with great clearness of mind and strength of voice." Her theme was the lessons to be learned from the uncertainty of life, and the relation that the Christian should maintain with his Lord. She coveted this opportunity for a last meeting with fellow believers in Battle Creek before leaving for the seclusion of Colorado.

The next Monday, August 22, with her two daughters-in-law, Emma and Mary, she left for Colorado, where she expected to spend a few weeks in retirement and rest and rejuvenation.

A few days were spent in Boulder, where lived the McDearmons, Emma's parents. Ellen spent most of one day writing out the circumstances connected with her husband's death ([Manuscript 6, 1881](#)) for use in the *In Memoriam* pamphlet in preparation at Battle Creek. In this statement she dwelt quite fully upon their experience during the two weeks previous to his death, especially their praying seasons and conversation that showed that James had some foreboding of a change and that he was prepared. Ellen closed her statement with words of appreciation to friends in Battle Creek and those who assisted her:

I wish to express my appreciation of the kindness, attention, and sympathy extended to both my husband and myself by the physicians and helpers of the Sanitarium. All exerted themselves to the utmost for our relief and recovery. Especially would I acknowledge with gratitude Dr. Kellogg's skillful care as a physician,

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as well as his kindness and sympathy as a brother and friend, in my sickness and bereavement.

To those also who brightened my sickroom with flowers, I extend my sincere thanks. Not one of these favors is forgotten. I have also been cheered and comforted by letters of sympathy from absent friends. I have not strength to respond to these separately, but I thank all for their words of love in my affliction.—[Manuscript 6, 1881](#) (see also *In Memoriam*, p. 57).

Then with Mary she was off to “White’s Ranch” and the little cottage they owned on a few acres in the mountains near Rollinsville, Colorado.

So Alone in the Mountains

Although her health was improving and she was sleeping quite well, she was unable to apply herself yet to writing. As she looked from the cottage to the pine-covered hills close by she was reminded of the many happy times she and James had enjoyed there. But this time he was not there to share her thoughts and feelings. She wrote:

I have been among the mountains, but alone.... Alone, alone! God’s dealings seem mysterious, His purposes unfathomable; yet I know that they must be just, and wise, and merciful. It is my privilege and duty to wait patiently for Him, the language of my heart at all times being, “He doeth all things well.”—[Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 257](#).

Willie had remained in Battle Creek to work with Edson in taking care of the financial affairs relating to James White’s estate. To him she wrote on September 12:

I miss Father more and more. Especially do I feel his loss while here in the mountains. I find it a very different thing being in the mountains with my husband and in the mountains without him. I am fully of the opinion that my life was so entwined or interwoven

with my husband's that it is about impossible for me to be of any great account without him. We have tested the mountains under most unfavorable circumstances.—
[Letter 17, 1881.](#)

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For her, Colorado with its beautiful mountains had lost its lure. She did some sewing to while away the time, but only little writing. Butler was urging her to attend the General Conference session being planned for November or December. The California camp meeting would be held a little before that, and she was debating in her mind whether to return for the winter to their comfortable home in Battle Creek or to go to California and occupy their Oakland home. As to the General Conference session, she told Mary that she “must have further light before consenting to go in her present state of health” (MKW to WCW, September 14, 1881). She finally decided in favor of California, for she felt it would not be prudent to return to the East with the burdens she would have to face there.

A Solemn and Far-Reaching Testimony

Leaving “White’s Ranch,” Ellen White was back in Boulder for the weekend of September 24 and 25. Having decided not to return to Michigan, on Sunday she wrote a testimony—a solemn and far-reaching testimony to be read at the Michigan camp meeting. When published later, it filled nearly thirteen *Testimony* pages:
Dear Brethren and Sisters Who Shall Assemble at the Michigan Camp Meeting:

I feel a deeper interest in this meeting than in any other that has been held this season. Michigan has not had the labor which she should have had. God has planted important institutions among you, and this brings upon you greater responsibilities than upon any other conference in the whole field. Great light has been given you, and few have responded to it; yet my heart goes out in tender solicitude for our beloved people in Michigan.—[Testimonies for the Church, 5:9.](#)

After writing of the responsibility of the ministers, she turned to Battle Creek College, now under the leadership of a new president, Dr. A. McLearn, an Adventist of but a few months. She wrote that it was founded to prepare young men to labor for God, and that the leading men in the college should be men of piety and devotion. [184] “They should make the Bible the rule and guide of life, giving heed to the sure word of prophecy.”—*Ibid.*, 5:12.

But she pointed out:

Much that has no part in Christ is allowed a place among us. Unconsecrated ministers, professors, and teachers assist Satan to plant his banner in our very strongholds.

The design of our college has been stated again and again, yet many are so blinded by the god of this world that its real object is not understood.... Some of the teachers have been scattering from Christ instead of gathering with Him. By their own example they lead those under their charge to adopt the customs and habits of worldlings. They link the hands of the students with fashionable, amusement-loving unbelievers, and carry them an advance step toward the world and away from Christ.—*Ibid.*

The Lord never designed that our college should imitate other institutions of learning. The religious element should be the controlling power.... I have been shown that, as a people, we are departing from the simplicity of the gospel. Many are in great peril.—*Ibid.*, 5:14-18.

Near the end of her communication she made reference to the special work laid upon her, and spoke with directness:

Let none entertain the thought that I regret or take back any plain testimony I have borne to individuals or to the people. If I have erred anywhere, it is in not rebuking sin more decidedly and firmly. Some of the brethren have taken the responsibility of criticizing my work and proposing an easier way to correct wrongs.

To these persons I would say: I take God's way and not yours. What I have said or written in testimony or reproof has not been too plainly expressed. God has given me my work, and I must meet it at the judgment....

Within a few weeks past, standing face to face with death, I have had a near look into eternity. If the Lord is pleased to raise me from my present state of feebleness, I hope, in the grace and strength that comes from above, to speak with fidelity the words which He gives me to speak. All through my life it has been terribly hard for me to hurt the feelings of any, or disturb their self-deception, as I deliver the testimonies given me of God. It is contrary to my nature. It costs me great pain and many sleepless nights.... I will walk in humility before God, doing my work for time and for eternity.—[Ibid., 5:19, 20.](#)

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The testimony continues with a page more, dealing with her work and the difficulties she faced in performing the unpleasant tasks of a messenger for God. This message was received in Michigan in the midst of the camp meeting, but for some reason church leaders failed to bring it before the people for whom it was intended ([Ibid., 5:9](#)). This circumstance was one of the first of a series that was to bring distress to Ellen White.

The California Camp Meeting

With the California camp meeting to be held in Sacramento in the offing, she with her helpers, left Boulder for Oakland on October 2. Physically she was steadily gaining ground, and when the camp meeting opened on Thursday evening, October 13, at East Park Grove, she was there. In light of her severe illness, it was anticipated that she would not be able to speak much, but she spoke almost every afternoon. J. H. Waggoner reported that her address Sabbath afternoon, October 15," was equal to the best effort we ever knew her to put forth." ([The Signs of the Times, October 27, 1881](#)).

Waggoner added, "Besides this, her counsel was of great value throughout the meeting." Perhaps the most important business item

introduced at the meeting was in taking steps “to establish a school by Seventh-day Adventists in California.” Ellen White, with her sense of the importance of Christian education, was most certain to have spoken to this.

A committee was appointed to carry this intention into effect as soon as possible, to meet the present want, also to examine and report in regard to a permanent location. A vote was taken to invite Professor Brownsberger to come and take charge of it. This is a matter over which the minds of the brethren have been much exercised for some time, and we cannot express our gratification that our desires in regard to it are likely to be speedily fulfilled.—[Ibid.](#)

[186] A school board was elected, with W. C. White as chairman. In addition to J. H. Waggoner, editor of the *Signs*, five prominent businessmen and farmers served on the board.

Through the remaining months of 1881 and into the early part of 1882, Ellen White, residing first in Oakland and then in Healdsburg, spent much of her time visiting the churches. At first she went to those nearby, in Oakland and San Francisco, and then included Petaluma, Healdsburg, St. Helena, Napa, Williams, Arbuckle, and Santa Rosa. She was not ready to apply herself to a heavy program of writing. On occasion she was invited to speak in other than Seventh-day Adventist churches. Then, taking the subject matter of her addresses made here and there, she prepared a series of weekly articles for the *Signs* that ran under the general heading “Among the Churches.” Much of the travel was by carriage, Ellen White doing the driving. One report concerning the thirty-five-mile trip from Healdsburg to St. Helena is highly descriptive:

Brother and Sister Harmon [in whose comfortable home she had spent a few days] thought it unsafe for Sister Rogers and myself to make the journey alone at this season of the year. Hence they accompanied us, their team leading the way, while ours followed. When we left Healdsburg, the fog was so dense that we could

see but a short distance before us, but in a few hours the mists dispersed, and we enjoyed beautiful sunshine.

The road through Knight's Canyon, always perilous to the inexperienced traveler, is often impassable in the rainy season. We were very thankful for a pilot in this part of our journey. I dared not look either to the right or left to view the scenery, but, holding the lines firmly, and guiding my horse in the narrow passage, I followed our leader. Carelessness here would have been fatal. Had our horse turned out of the right path, we should have plunged down a steep precipice, into the ravine below.

As we rode along in almost breathless silence, I could but think how forcibly this dangerous ride illustrates the Christian's experience. We are making life's journey amid the perils of the last days. We need to watch carefully every step, and to be sure that we are following our great Leader.—[Ibid., January 26, 1882](#)

[187] **Chapter 16—(1882) The Year Battle Creek College Closed**

The action to close Battle Creek College, taken by its controlling board in the summer of 1882, signaled a crisis of considerable proportions in the ranks of Seventh-day Adventists. The story is summed up in the statement of the chairman of the board, George I. Butler, published in [The Review and Herald, September 12, 1882](#):

When the matter of opening the college the present year came before the board for consideration, we were thrown into great perplexity. We could see little ground of hope for such a school as the Lord had shown we ought to have, while the present state of things existed.

In three columns of the *Review* Butler took up the “present state of things,” some of which will be mentioned shortly; but it is easily seen that attitudes toward the counsels that had come to the church through the Spirit of Prophecy drew Ellen White prominently into the picture.

The testimony written from Boulder, Colorado, on September 25, which Ellen White intended should be presented at the Michigan camp meeting, was finally read in December, 1881, before the General Conference in session (see [Testimonies for the Church, 5:9-21](#)). Also read at that time to a smaller group, including workers in the *Review and Herald* office, the Sanitarium, and the college, together with some of the delegates meeting in College Hall, was the fifteen-page testimony entitled “Our College” ([Ibid., 5:21-36](#)). This solemn message opens with the words:

[188] There is danger that our college will be turned away from its original design. God’s purpose has been made known, that our people should have an opportunity to study the sciences and at the same time to learn the

requirements of His word.... But for one or two years past there has been an effort to mold our school after other colleges....

I was shown that it is Satan's purpose to prevent the attainment of the very object for which the college was established. Hindered by his devices, its managers reason after the manner of the world and copy its plans and imitate its customs. But in thus doing, they will not meet the mind of the Spirit of God.—[Ibid., 5:21-23](#).

A New President for Battle Creek College

A change in administration at the college that thrust Dr. A. McLearn to the front greatly hastened the degenerating trend. McLearn was placed at the head of Battle Creek College in July, 1881, and school started in the autumn. The move was a hasty one, the result of the resignation, for health reasons, of Sidney Brownberger. McLearn only recently had been baptized as a Seventh-day Adventist. He was highly educated along conventional lines (holding the degree of Doctor of Divinity). But he had no acquaintance with either the history of the Seventh-day Adventists or the philosophy of their educational work.

This new man had become known to church leaders back in early June, on a Sabbath morning at the Spring Arbor camp meeting. James White, in the *Review*, wrote of it:

Brother McLearn arose and stated that he was but a young convert, and knew nothing of the past of which others had spoken. The truth was all light to him, and he saw no cause for discouragement. Brother McLearn is a highly educated Christian gentleman. He has made great sacrifices in coming with us. We should be pleased to see him holding a position of importance in the cause.—[The Review and Herald, June 7, 1881](#).

Unwisely for himself and the cause, he was placed in such a position in less than two months, much too soon.

The college did not have dormitories. Students boarded with families in the community or on their own. This exacerbated prob-

lems of discipline. Hosts, naturally inclined to sympathize with and to accredit the reports of the respective students who boarded with them, took sides on school-related issues. This brought divisions in the Battle Creek church, itself a church without a pastor.

Goodloe Bell, virtually the founder and father of the school, remained as a teacher. He was an excellent educator, but he lacked good public relations. His insistence on thoroughness of drill, his concepts of methods of education, and his devotion to principles on which the college was founded were in marked contrast with the liberal, compromising policies of McLearn.

Ellen White described the situation in Battle Creek in July, 1881, just before McLearn took over as principal.

I have been shown that there are unruly tongues among the church members at Battle Creek. There are false tongues that feed on mischief. There are sly, whispering tongues. There is tattling, impertinent meddling, adroit quizzing. Among the lovers of gossip, some are actuated by curiosity, others by jealousy, many by hatred against those through whom God has spoken to reprove them. All these discordant elements are at work. Some conceal their real sentiments, while others are eager to publish all they know, or even suspect, of evil against another.

I saw that the very spirit of perjury that would turn truth into falsehood, good into evil, and innocence into crime is now active, doing a work which savors of hell rather than of heaven. Satan exults over the condition of God's professed people. While they are neglecting their own souls, many eagerly watch for an opportunity to criticize and condemn one to whom God has entrusted responsibilities in his work. All have defects of character, and it is not hard to find something that jealousy can interpret to his injury.—[Testimony for the Battle Creek Church, 80](#).

In such an atmosphere, and with the contrasting positions of two prominent men in the college, the conservative Bell was crowded

out. He was not without some weaknesses and defects, of course. The published 1872 *Testimony to the Church at Battle Creek*, based on Ellen White's vision of December 10, 1871, makes this clear. But he was also the subject of many words of commendation from Ellen White, of which the following is typical: [190]

The Lord has shown me the value of Brother Bell's labors. The Lord has commended his thoroughness as a teacher, both in the college and in the Sabbath school. When it was suggested that Brother Bell travel and labor in the Sabbath school interest in different States, I said at once that I did not see how he could be spared from the college.—[Ibid.](#), 31.

The College Problems Enumerated

As Butler gave his report in the *Review* of the action to close Battle Creek College, he designated some of the problems that led to the traumatic move. He stated that for some time a cloud had been gathering which threatened to destroy the usefulness of the college in performing the special work for which it was brought into existence. There was a lack of "cordial cooperation" on the part of a portion of the church with the authorities of the college in sustaining right influences and proper discipline. He continued:

The policy of the school was gradually changing, becoming more like that of the worldly schools around it. This, of course, is the natural tendency unless a strong religious influence is maintained.... The past year this tendency has been more marked. New policies have prevailed. The discipline has been lowered. Insubordination became manifest among students, and to some degree among teachers also. The matters came to a crisis.

The board of directors whom the stockholders placed in control found themselves powerless to hold in check these influences.... A majority of the faculty, sustained by a large portion of the church, threatened to

resign in a body if certain measures taken by the board were not retracted. Mass meetings of the students were held to sustain their favorites in the faculty.... The board virtually had nothing to do with the management of the college for months during the past year....

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The tide ran so high that those teachers who had done most in founding the college lost their influence, and were looked upon with dislike. Their lot was made very hard, and stories were circulated against some of them which were calculated to ruin their reputation as Christians, and even as moral men, and these have been circulated through the land.—[The Review and Herald, September 12, 1882.](#)

Faced with these conditions and unable to see the possibility of operating “such a school as the Lord had shown we ought to have” with the present state existing, “the board finally [during the summer recess] decided to close the college,” with no definite plan to reopen. It was a sad day.

New Schools in the East and the West

But in the East and the West was a brighter picture. Four months before the Battle Creek College board acted to close, two new Adventist schools were opened—South Lancaster Academy, in Massachusetts, under the guiding hand of the seasoned S. N. Haskell, and Healdsburg Academy, in California, something less than a hundred miles north of the Bay cities of San Francisco and Oakland. The founders of both schools were determined to profit by the experience of Battle Creek College.

Haskell brought Goodloe Bell to the Massachusetts school. W. C. White led in forming the Healdsburg school. His mother, who lived nearby, took a special interest in establishing this school according to the educational principles set before Adventists through the light God had given to her.

The Healdsburg School

The starting of the school in the West was marked with earnestness. As noted earlier, on October 20, 1881, at the camp meeting held at Sacramento, which was attended by Ellen White, the delegates took action to establish an educational institution in California. A school committee of seven was appointed four days later. W. C. White, as chairman, was authorized, among other responsibilities, to “select a building at some eligible point in the State [in northern California].” Before a month had passed, a well-built school building was found at Healdsburg. It cost \$10,000, but could be secured, with furniture, for \$3,750.

Just at this point the chairman had to leave for Battle Creek and the General Conference session. But he was back in time to attend a meeting of the school board held in Healdsburg January 28 and 29, 1882. Five of the seven members, W. C. White, John Morrison, J. H. Waggoner, T. M. Chapman, and William Saunders, were present. Ellen White was invited to meet with them. The minutes record:

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At the first meeting, Mrs. E. G. White made appropriate remarks upon what should be the aims and ends of a denominational school, such as is purposed to be established in this State by Seventh-day Adventists, the gist of which was that “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,” and that it was necessary to have a school of our own in order to take the children away from the evil influences found in nearly all the common schools and colleges of the day.—[The Signs of the Times, February 16, 1882.](#)

Appropriate actions were taken toward an early opening of the school. Professor Sidney Brownsberger, now recovered from his illness, was invited to take charge, and his wife was asked to become one of the teachers. Without delay, earnest Adventist families started moving to Healdsburg to take advantage of the academy. It was announced to open Tuesday, April 11 ([Ibid., April 6, 1882](#)). That first day twenty-six students were on hand to register, more than had been expected ([Ibid., April 20, 1882](#)). The whole school enterprise

was carried forward on a wave of enthusiasm and good will among its constituents and also among the community of Healdsburg.

On Monday, April 24, the annual meeting of the Pacific SDA Publishing Association was held in Oakland, bringing together a good representation from the churches. Time was found at that meeting for the discussion of the school project. At two-thirty in the afternoon, less than two weeks after the opening of the school, a large group assembled in the Oakland church to hear reports and review plans for the new enterprise. Sidney Brownsberger reported on the rather phenomenal progress being made, W. C. White on the good fortune in being able to assemble such a capable faculty, and Ellen White on the time and need for the school. Her remarks were addressed to a resolution calling for a pledge to labor for the success of the school, and the encouragement of a good attendance:

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It is the purpose of managers and teachers, not so much to copy the plans and methods of other institutions of learning, as to make this school such as God can approve. We trust that a high moral and religious standard will be maintained, and that Healdsburg Academy will be free from those pernicious influences which are so prevalent in popular schools.—[Ibid., May 4, 1882](#)

Near the close of her address she employed words familiar to us today, apparently something she had found in *Good Health*, March, 1879, titled “Oh, for a Man!” and credited to the *Louisville Commercial*. (See also “Men Wanted,” [The Review and Herald, January 24, 1871.](#))

The greatest want of this age is the want of men—men who will not be bought or sold, men who are true and honest in their inmost souls; men who will not fear to call sin by its right name, and to condemn it, in themselves or in others; men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole; men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.—[The Signs of the Times, May 4, 1882.](#)

To attain some of the objectives set forth by Ellen White called for some departures from the program at the Battle Creek school: (1) There must be regular classes in Bible study, not just chapel lectures; (2) there must be a school home, or dormitory; (3) there must be a program that would provide physical activity with study—in other words, an industrial program. These were basic in the planning for the Healdsburg Academy. It would take time to implement some of the elements, particularly the providing of a school home.

The first twenty-week term closed in mid-June with an enrollment of thirty-eight ([Ibid., June 8, 1882](#)). By that time a five-acre tract two blocks from the school building had been secured and plans for a school home were under way.

When the second term opened July 26, the fledgling institution had undergone a change in name. Acting on a popular request of the community, the board had named the school “Healdsburg College” ([Ibid., July 13, 1882](#)). By this time also, an Adventist woman of some means had made a gift of \$5,000, and work could begin on the school home, or “boardinghouse”, as it was known. In the basement would be the kitchen, laundry, and bakery. On the first floor, classrooms and a working parlor. The second story would accommodate the young ladies, and the third would be a dormitory for the young men ([Ibid., October 26, 1882](#)).

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Ellen White Finds a Home Base

The school in Healdsburg was initiated and commenced its work during a period of physical weakness and frustration on the part of Ellen White. It was a full year after James White’s death in early August, 1881, before she was sufficiently recovered from physical prostration, grief, and overwhelming concern for Battle Creek to engage in a consistent program of book preparation. After traveling out from Oakland to visit among the churches in northern California through the early winter months, she decided that she would make Healdsburg her California headquarters. She and James had built a home on a little farm on West Dry Creek Road, about three miles from the village, which had not been sold. On February 7, 1882, she wrote to Willie, who was managing the Pacific Press in Oakland:

Now I am decided to go to my Healdsburg place.... I shall not move much at present. Shall get me a cheap secondhand stove and a little cheap furniture and commence living for myself at present. In my Healdsburg house I have all the conveniences I wish.... I like the water. I can keep a cow and hens and chickens. I can get vegetables cheap and fruit cheap, but best of all I have a place that pleases me and that I want to live in.

I believe some way will be provided for me. I do not get suitable food going around.... It is my right to make myself comfortable and place myself under the very best circumstances healthwise....

After staying a while on my place without making any great parade or expense, I can test the matter fully whether my health is better. If not, my next step will be to go to St. Helena. I do not wish to put up a house in St. Helena and be to more expense if I can live in Healdsburg near the school.—[Letter 1a, 1882](#).

[195] On Thursday, February 23, her personal belongings and some furniture arrived from Oakland and were moved into the little home on the farm. The next day her letter addressed to Willie and Mary in Oakland carried the dateline of “White’s Ranch,” Healdsburg, California, February 24, 1882. And in the *Signs of the Times* for March 9 was a notice that she requested to have published, “The post office address of Mrs. E. G. White is Healdsburg, Sonoma County, California.” She drew in her family of literary and home helpers, hoping soon to settle down to a serious program of writing. But this she found hard to do. She took pleasure in scouting around the country, buying grain and hay, chickens, a cow with its calf, and horses for transportation and to work the place. One horse was Dolly, of which she wrote on April 2:

George [a hired man] thinks that Dolly may work into plowing or harrowing. She is awkward, but she tries to learn. She will see what Katy does and will try to do just as she does. Everything is odd to her now, and she stares at the mountains and hills as if she was

a tourist viewing the scenery. I think she enjoys the change.—[Letter 4, 1882](#).

April was a busy month for gardening. From the Italian garden nearby they secured a large number of strawberry plants. She and Addie Walling joined Brother Bellow in planting them. A good many grapevines were also set out ([Letter 8, 1882](#)). A few days later she secured from the Italian garden beet and spinach plants to transplant. Also she helped in planting seeds for parsnips, cabbage, carrots, and beets. “We shall have quite a garden,” she wrote, “if the Lord favors us.” May and Addie Walling were living with her and attended the public school. She drove them to the school in the morning and picked them up in the afternoon. She pictured her home situation:

My health is good. I have some trouble in sleeping all I want to. I exercise considerably, picking up wood, and if it were not for weak ankles, would exercise more. I put rubber bandages on my ankles and this helps them. I feel then I can walk anywhere.—[Ibid.](#)

In a letter written April 16, in which she mentioned some of the afflictions of those about her, she said, “I find, after all, your mother can endure about as much as the younger people.”—[Letter 9, 1882](#). But up to this point, she had to force herself to her writing. This was limited more or less to the Battle Creek situation, some work on *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 4, and the touches she must give to the articles prepared for the *Signs* and the *Review*. Many of the latter were drawn by her literary assistants from her earlier writings, published and in manuscript. The *Signs* for the year 1882 carried fifty-seven articles from her pen. Some were on Old Testament history, some reported her work among the churches, and a number were on practical subjects (some of the latter were reprinted from earlier issues of the *Review and Herald*). Quite naturally, at this time some articles on education-related topics were also published. The *Review* published twenty-three E. G. White articles in 1882, dealing mostly with practical subjects.

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The Battle Creek Church, Uriah Smith, and the Testimonies

Particularly painful to her was the stance taken by *Review* editor Uriah Smith in connection with the deteriorating Battle Creek College situation.

Smith's children attending the school sided with the liberal element, which was critical of Bell; evidently Smith's sympathies tended in the same direction. During this period an occasional interchange of letters took place between him and Ellen White. In her testimonies relating to Battle Creek, the church, and the college, she had probed the matter and given counsel based on her insights into the conflict and the attitude of various individuals. One key to the problem came to light later by way of Smith's letter to her written August 10, 1882:

The ground of my hesitancy to regard that part of your communication referring to the special school trouble as a "testimony" was the fact that I had always supposed that a testimony was based on a vision, and I did not understand that you had had any vision since the recent trouble in the college commenced; hence I did not see how there could be any "testimony," in the common acceptation of that term, concerning these special matters. At the same time I said that if you should claim that it was a testimony, I would accept the situation; and so I do.

[197] Hiding behind this philosophy, Smith attributed what she wrote concerning school matters in her letters of reproof and counsel to reports Ellen White had received and to her own opinions. He overlooked the fact that God reveals His will to His prophets in diverse manners. Also overlooked was the fact that she wrote stern messages of rebuke only as she was led by the Spirit of God to do so. In the course of time this led Ellen White to make some very plain and revealing statements about her work. These were published first in a pamphlet of eighty-four pages, and in somewhat reduced form in *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 5.

On March 28, 1882, she wrote a letter to Smith that opened:
Dear Brother Smith,

Your letter was received in due time. While I was glad to hear from you, I was made sad as I read its contents. I had received similar letters from Sister Amadon, and from Brother Lockwood. But I have had no communications from Professor Bell or anyone who sustains him....

I am not surprised that such a state of things should exist in Battle Creek, but I am pained to find you, my much esteemed brother, involved in this matter, on the wrong side, with those whom I know God is not leading. Some of these persons are honest, but they are deceived. They have received their impressions from another source than the Spirit of God.—[Letter 2a, 1882](#) (published in [Testimony for the Battle Creek Church, 19, 20](#)).

Ellen White then reviewed the history of the declining course of the college and declared that she dare not longer remain silent. “I speak to you and to the church at Battle Creek.... You are responsible for the influence you have exerted upon the college. Peace has come, because the students have had their own way.”—[Ibid.](#) She continued:

God has given us, as a people, warnings, reproofs, and cautions on the right hand and on the left, to lead us away from worldly customs and worldly policy. He requires us to be peculiar in faith and in character, to meet a standard far in advance of worldlings. Professor McLearn came among you, unacquainted with the Lord’s dealings with us. Having newly come to the faith, he had almost everything to learn. Yet you have unhesitatingly placed your children under his guardianship, to be molded by his views and opinions. You have coincided with his judgment. You have sanctioned in him a spirit and course of action that have naught of Christ.—[Ibid.](#) (see also [Ibid., 30](#)).

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Professors and teachers have not understood the design of the college. We have put in means and thought and labor to make it what God would have it. The will

and judgment of a man who is almost wholly ignorant of the way in which God has led us as a people should not have a controlling influence in that college. The Lord has repeatedly shown me that we should not pattern after the popular schools.—*Ibid.* (see also *Ibid.*, 39, 40).

At one point in this cutting testimony she declared: “A few weeks since, I was in a dream brought into one of your meetings for investigation. I heard testimonies borne by students against Professor Bell.”—*Ibid.* It was these painful insights imparted to her by divine revelation that brought such distress of soul. To get the matter before the Battle Creek church, for it was the church that was so deeply involved, she asked Uriah Smith to read the testimony to the church. This he hesitated to do, for he was not in agreement with its contents.

On May 30, 1882, ignoring the tempest, Smith observed in the *Review* that the spring term at the college would close on June 15, and reported, “Everything has moved along pleasantly, and the students are well pleased with their advantages and advancement.”

Not all saw it that way. Butler later reported that the school was clear out of hand. Ellen White, writing to the church in Battle Creek on June 20, came right to the point:

Dear Brethren and Sisters in Battle Creek,

I understand that the testimony which I sent to Elder Smith [dated March 28; see *Ibid.*, 19-41] with the request that it be read to the church was withheld from you for several weeks after it was received by him. Before sending that testimony my mind was so impressed by the Spirit of God that I had no rest day or night until I wrote to you. It was not a work that I would have chosen for myself.—*Ibid.*, 41.

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She pointed out that Smith, as a leading officer in the church, was exercising his own judgment in the matter of following the counsel given him through the testimonies. In agony of soul she reviewed some history:

When I went to Colorado, I was so burdened for you, that, in my weakness, I wrote [in September, 1881] many pages to be read at your camp meeting. Weak and trembling, I arose at three o'clock in the morning, to write to you. God was speaking through clay. But the document was entirely forgotten; the camp meeting passed, and it was not read until the General Conference. You might say that it was only a letter. Yes, it was a letter, but prompted by the Spirit of God, to bring before your minds things that had been shown me....

While visiting Healdsburg last winter, I was much in prayer, and burdened with anxiety and grief. But the Lord swept back the darkness at one time while I was in prayer, and a great light filled the room. An angel of God was by my side, and I seemed to be in Battle Creek. I was in your councils; I heard words uttered, I saw and heard things that, if God willed, I wish could be forever blotted from my memory. My soul was so wounded, I knew not what to do or what to say. Some things I cannot mention. I was bidden to let no one know in regard to this, for much was yet to be developed.

I was told to gather up the light that had been given me, and let its rays shine forth to God's people. I have been doing this in articles in the papers.... Again, while in prayer, the Lord revealed Himself. I was once more in Battle Creek. I was in many houses. I heard your words around your tables, and was sick at heart, burdened, and disgusted. The particulars, I have no liberty now to relate. I hope never to be called to mention them. I had also several most striking dreams.

After I wrote you the long letter which has been belittled by Elder Smith as merely an expression of my own opinion, while at the southern California camp meeting [Hanford, May 4-15], the Lord partially removed the restriction, and I write as I do. I dare not say more now, lest I go beyond what the Spirit of the Lord has permitted me.—*Ibid.*, 49, 50.

In the testimonies sent to Battle Creek, I have given you the light God has given to me. In no case have I given my own judgment or opinion. I have enough to write of what has been shown me, without falling back on my own opinions.—*Ibid.*, 58.

These few excerpts from letters written in the early months of 1882 give a glimpse of a crisis over the validity of the testimonies and Smith's involvement. So often in the case of personal testimonies that touched the course of action and the life of the individual, it was hard to see the matter in its true light. How true is the Scripture observation "Every way of a man is right in his own eyes."

Smith felt that he was misunderstood by Ellen White and that he was fully justified in the course of action he was taking. In this matter his experience of wavering over the Spirit of Prophecy was not unique, and he wrote of it some years later in a statement appearing in *The Review and Herald, Extra, December, 1887*. Under the heading, "Personal," he introduces his statement:

Considerable handle, I understand, is being made in some directions of the fact that the editor of the *Review* has been troubled over the question of the visions, has been unsound on that question, and at one time came very near giving them up. It strikes me that this is quite a small amount of capital to work up much of a trade on—"came very near giving them up"—but didn't!

I also, at one time, came very near getting run over by the cars, and rolled into jelly; but I didn't, and so continue to this day. Some have met just such a catastrophe. The difference between them and myself is that they did, and I didn't. Some have given up the visions. The difference between them and myself is the same—they did, and I didn't. [See appendix for his full statement.]

The crisis in Battle Creek in which the college figured is treated at some length in the opening chapters of *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 5.

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When these testimonies were written, typewriters and carbon

paper had not come into common use. Each document had to be painstakingly copied by hand. If several copies were needed, it was a most forbidding task. The only alternative was to set the matter in type and run off copies on the press. In late June, Ellen White decided to return to Oakland and resort to this latter means of making a limited number of copies to be used in the Battle Creek situation. These were printed in a pamphlet of eighty-four pages, which was given the title *Testimony for the Battle Creek Church*. Because of its twenty-one-page central article, the pamphlet is at times referred to as “An Important Testimony.” It carries an introduction addressed “To the Reader,” stating, “The following pages contain instruction, warning, and admonition of special importance to the Battle Creek Church at the present crisis.” The promise was made that extracts would be published in the forthcoming *Testimony*, No. 31, then in preparation. This was eventually done, and appear in *Testimonies*, volume 5.

The Fourth of July Picnic

On Monday, July 3, Ellen White broke away from Oakland to make a quick trip to Healdsburg to gather up some of her writings needed in connection with what she was preparing for publication. Just before noon on Tuesday, the fourth of July, a man with a carriage came to the home and urged her to accompany him to the grove in the redwoods about six miles away where about fifty of the Healdsburg believers and some church officers and members of the school board had assembled for a picnic. She had already turned down an invitation, explaining that she was too pressed with work to attend. Now the word was that she would not be excused, but must come. “So, as usual,” she explained in a letter, “I had no heart to say No, and I went.”—[Letter 30, 1882](#).

Refreshments were placed upon the table linen which was spread upon the grass. Thanksgiving was offered to the gracious Giver of all our mercies, and then the hungry company ate with relish the good food abundantly prepared to supply a much larger number.

After this was the exercise of singing, and intercession was made to God for His blessing.—[Ibid](#)

[202] Ellen White then described a unique and most encouraging experience, one that must have cheered her heart as she was wrestling with the problems at Battle Creek.

While seated in this beautiful retired park, free from all confusion and bustle, a sweet peace came over my spirits. I seemed to be taken away from myself, and the bright home of the saints was presented vividly before me. In imagination I gathered with the saints around the wide-spreading tree of life. Friends and dear home relatives who had been separated from us by death were gathered there. The redeemed, white-robed multitude, who had washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, were there. No flaming guard stood around the tree of life, barring our approach. With happy, joyous songs of praise, the voices were blended in perfect harmony as we plucked of the fruit from the tree of life.

For a time I lost all thought of time, of place, of occasion—of everything earthly. Heaven was the subject of my contemplation—heaven, the much-longed-for heaven. I seemed to be there, where all was peace, where no stormy conflicts of earth could ever come.—[Ibid.](#)

“No gloom of doubt casts its baleful shadow upon its happy inhabitants,” she noted as she continued the description. “No voices of contention mar the sweet and perfect peace of heaven.... All is in perfect harmony, in perfect order and perfect bliss.... Love reigns there. There are no jarring elements, no discord or contentions or war of words.”—[Ibid.](#)

A day or two after the picnic she returned to Oakland to continue in getting the messages from the God of heaven before the church, and particularly the church in trouble in Battle Creek. During July she wrote five hundred pages of manuscript, traveled considerably,

and preached ten times in nearby churches. It was a heavy strain, but she was pressing to get out *Testimony* No. 31.

The E. G. White Home in the Town of Healdsburg

The home on the little farm on West Dry Creek Road was several miles from the town of Healdsburg. Mrs. White wanted to be close to the college. Early in August she bought a two-story house on Powell Street, which bordered the town. It stood on a 21/2-acre tract of good land with an orchard of fruit trees of choice varieties. As the college's "boardinghouse" was under construction, her house was at once fitted up to board the carpenters. A heavy yield of plums and peaches was canned for the college and the Health Retreat at St. Helena. W. C. White reported that "Mother engaged in this work with great interest, saying, in answer to our cautions, that it was a rest to her weary brain" ([The Review and Herald, September 26, 1882](#)). When she was on the West Coast, this was her home until she went to Australia in 1891.

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In late August, while in Oakland, Ellen White suffered a severe chill followed by fever. This serious illness lasted several weeks. As she began to recover, she pleaded to be taken to the Health Retreat at St. Helena. She was taken there on September 15 in a reclining wheelchair in the baggage cars of the two trains in which the journey was made. But she did not improve at the Retreat. As the time for the California camp meeting to be held at Healdsburg drew near, she pleaded to be taken back to her Healdsburg home. She hoped to be strong enough to bear her testimony at the camp meeting and to work for the support of the new school. Resting on a mattress in the back of a carriage driven by her son Willie, and accompanied by Jenny Ings, she started out on the trip to Healdsburg.

The day grew very warm. As W. C. White later recounted the experience to members of his family, he told how his mother, in time, failed to answer his questions; he knew she had lapsed into unconsciousness. He urged the horses on, hoping to reach Healdsburg with his mother still alive. They did, and in her own home she rallied a bit. It was her hope and the hope of her family that in the environment of the camp meeting she might experience a renewal of life and strength. Camp meeting opened in early October

in a grove about half a mile from her home. Although very feeble and hardly able to leave her bed, at noon on the first Sabbath she gave instruction:

Prepare me a place in the large tent where I can hear the speaker. Possibly the sound of the speaker's voice will prove a blessing to me. I am hoping for something to bring new life.—[Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 262](#).

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Healed at the Camp Meeting

A sofa was arranged for her on the broad speaker's stand, and she was carried into the big tent and placed upon it. Those close by observed not only her weakness but also the deathly paleness of her face. Recalling the experience some years later, Ellen White said that not only was the large tent full, but "it seemed as if nearly all Healdsburg was present."—[Letter 82, 1906](#).

J. H. Waggoner, editor of the *Signs of the Times*, spoke that Sabbath afternoon "on the rise and early work of the message, and its progress and present state" ([The Signs of the Times, October 26, 1882](#)). When Waggoner had finished his address, Ellen White turned to Willie and Mrs. Ings, who were at her side, and said, "Will you help me up, and assist me to stand on my feet while I say a few words?" They aided her to the desk. "For five minutes I stood there," she later recalled, "trying to speak, and thinking that it was the last speech I should ever make—my farewell message." With both hands she steadied herself at the pulpit. She relates:

All at once I felt a power come upon me, like a shock of electricity. It passed through my body and up to my head. The people said that they plainly saw the blood mounting to my lips, my ears, my cheeks, my forehead.—[Letter 82, 1906](#).

Every eye in the audience seemed fixed on her. Mr. Montrose, a businessman from the town, stood to his feet and exclaimed, "We are seeing a miracle performed before our eyes; Mrs. White is healed!" (WCW account). Her voice strengthened, her sentences came clear

and full, and she bore a testimony such as the audience had never before heard. Waggoner filled out the story in his report in the *Signs*:

Her voice and appearance changed, and she spoke for some time with clearness and energy. She then invited those who wished to make a start in the service of God, and those who were far backslidden, to come forward, and a goodly number answered to the call.—[The Signs of the Times, October 26, 1882.](#)

Smith, who was present, in his report in the *Review and Herald* published October 31, mentioned that after the miraculous healing “she was able to attend meetings ...as usual, and spoke six times with her ordinary strength of voice and clearness of thought.” Referring to the experience, Ellen White said, “It was as if one had been raised from the dead.... This sign the people in Healdsburg were to have as a witness for the truth.”—[Letter 82, 1906.](#)

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This event, which seemed to be a turning point in her physical condition, opened the way for a strong ministry. In reporting her two-month illness, she remarked that she had expected it would gradually pass. Instead, she was healed instantaneously. She affirmed:

It cannot be attributed to imagination. The people saw me in my feebleness, and many remarked that to all appearances I was a candidate for the grave. Nearly all present marked the changes which took place in me while I was addressing them.... I testify to all who read these words, that the Lord has healed me.... My whole system was imbued with new strength and vigor. A new tide of emotions, a new and elevated faith, took possession of my soul.—[Signs of the Times, November 2, 1882.](#)

She was glad to be in the large group that during the camp meeting went to see the new college. First was the visit to the new building—the boardinghouse under construction—and then the school building. A brief dedication service was held in the “audience room,” which could not contain all the visitors. After Waggoner

offered the dedicatory prayer, Ellen called for singing a verse of “Hold the Fort,” in which the whole congregation heartily joined.

Chapter 17—(1883) Immersed in Book Production [206]

It was early summer in 1882 before Ellen White had recovered sufficiently from the shock of James White's death to settle down to a consistent program of book production. When she did, weighing heavily on her mind was volume 4 of the *Spirit of Prophecy* series—*The Great Controversy*, dealing with the post-Christian era from the destruction of Jerusalem to the new earth. But first there was the writing dealing with current issues, primarily those relating to Battle Creek. She was living in her home on the little farm on West Dry Creek Road just out of Healdsburg. At first she felt she could give only half of each day to literary work, spending the other half-day in sewing and chores about the place.

In early August, *Testimony* No. 31 came from the press. It was a 244-page volume available in either paper or cloth binding but with a larger sized page than heretofore—approximately the *Testimony* size so well known by Seventh-day Adventists. Its serious messages had an impressive impact on the church, particularly the seven chapters that filled the first eighty-nine pages, dealing with the Battle Creek problem and education in general in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. These carried the titles “Camp Meeting Address,” “Our College,” “Parental Training,” “Important Testimony,” “The Testimonies Slighted,” “Workers in Our College,” and “Jealousy and Faultfinding Condemned.”

Currently these chapters fill the first one hundred pages of *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 5.

S. N. Haskell declared *Testimony* No. 31 to be “the most solemn one that has been published” ([The Review and Herald, October 24, 1882](#)). Early in the Ohio camp meeting a copy arrived and frequently the entire camp was called together to hear portions read; the hearers were deeply affected ([The Signs of the Times, September 7, 1882](#)). G. I. Butler, the president of the General Conference, wrote of it, “Never before has so important a testimony been given to us.... It is filled with the choicest matter and the most stirring truths. Never [207]

were our dangers set before us as a people more clearly.”—[The Review and Herald, August 22, 1882](#). Reported Sanborn, a minister, “How thankful I feel that the Lord has not left us in our darkness and backslidings, but in mercy calls us to hear His special counsel.” ([Ibid., September 19, 1882](#)).

Early Writings of Ellen G. White

Just before the turn of the year, a little volume bearing the title of *Early Writings of Ellen G. White* came from the press. It was a book eagerly sought by Adventist families, for it provided Ellen White’s three earliest books, long out of print:

1. *Christian Experience and Views of Mrs. E. G. White*, a sixty-four-page pamphlet published in 1851 that presented many of her early visions. This included her first vision, at this time found in no other work.

2. *Supplement to Experience and Views*, a forty-eight-page pamphlet published in 1854. It explained some points in the preceding work that were not clear to all readers, and added some testimony-type articles on church order, et cetera.

3. *Spiritual Gifts*, Volume I, the 219-page presentation of the great controversy story published in 1858.

As noted in an earlier chapter, at the General Conference session of 1879 action was taken recommending “the publication of a small edition of her [Ellen White’s] earliest writings, now out of print, to bring all her writings within the reach of those anxious to obtain them” ([Ibid., December 4, 1879](#)).

Butler was delighted when finally in late 1882 this was brought about. He wrote an announcement for the *Review* entitled “A Book Long Desired.” After naming the little books comprising *Early Writings*, he explained:

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The first two, published some thirty years ago, have long been out of print, and only a very few of the older Sabbathkeepers have ever seen them. The latter has been read by more, as a larger edition was published.... But we wish to speak more especially of the two first-mentioned portions of the volume. There has long been

a strong desire for the publication of a new edition of these. These were the very first of the published writings of Sister White. Since they went out of print, many thousands have become interested in her writings. Many of these have greatly desired to have in their possession *all* she has written for publication.... It meets a want long felt.—*Ibid.*, December 26, 1882

Butler then discussed the criticisms brought by certain persons who had leveled accusations against the church of suppressing the early E. G. White writings. He declared, “They have claimed to be very anxious to obtain these writings to show up their supposed errors. They now have the opportunity.”

When Butler explained the publication of *Early Writings*, he was doing so in terms of the republication of Ellen White’s early *books*, notably the first, *Experience and Views*. He made no reference to the fact that her first vision had been published in several forms in 1846 and 1847—an article, a broadside, a pamphlet by James White. When the account of her first vision appeared in her first book, there were some deletions of which he was either unaware or had overlooked. Copies of these very early items were extremely scarce. The critics made the most of it, claiming suppression. As will be noted in another chapter, Ellen White herself entered the discussion and made some explanations. The publication of *Early Writings* was actually and truly the reprinting of the earlier books. As soon as copies were available in Oakland, Ellen White autographed and sent one each to Haskell, Smith, Andrews, Loughborough, and J. E. White (MKW to WCW, January 7, 1882).

New Year’s Day, 1883

When the new year dawned, Ellen White was spending a few days in Oakland at the W. C. White home. Willie was in Battle Creek, having gone east to attend the 1882 General Conference session held in Rome, New York. She had received an invitation from officers of the Oakland church to be present at the Sabbath school reunion to be held New Year’s night and had made the trip from Healdsburg a few days before. Mary White, urging her mother-

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in-law to accept the invitation and spend a few days in Oakland, wrote somewhat of the program that was planned:

They intend to have a Christmas tree, or rather a New Year's tree, and some exercises by the children, and would like an address by you. We would like to have you with us Christmas too, and would urge it strongly were it not that you dislike our climate so much and might not be able to remain till New Year's. Would want you to stay as long as you can after New Year's.

We don't intend to go into Christmas presents very heavily this year, but I tell the family that if they have any presents to make, they must wait till New Year's so as to have you with us. So you must be sure to come.—MKW to EGW, December 17, 1882.

When Ellen White received this letter she was deeply involved in writing volume 4, but she was pleased to accept Mary's invitation.

The Monday night New Year's program, in which she participated, went off well. "The exercises were good and appropriate," Ellen wrote. "I spoke about one-half hour." Her remarks must have been appropriate and fitted to her audience, for she says, "The children listened with interest." Two Christmas trees were in the church, the trees and their decorations donated by the German Baptists. Offerings to the Lord were placed on one of the trees as fruit, and when gathered netted \$172 for the Oakland church. Her final brief comment was that "all passed off pleasantly; nothing objectionable in the whole matter."—[Letter 8, 1883](#).

Holiday Articles in the Review and Signs

In preparation of articles for the *Review and Herald* and the *Signs of the Times*, Ellen White and her helpers had worked ahead of the calendar. The readers of the *Signs* found the first article in the 1883 volume appropriately titled "The Old Year and the New." Its opening paragraph urged all, as the new year dawned, to engage in "serious, candid, critical self-examination," especially in "the things which concern our eternal interests" ([The Signs of the Times, January 4,](#)

1883). Her *Review and Herald* article ran to five columns. It was titled “Holiday Gifts“: readers were reminded: [210]

The holiday season is fast approaching with its interchange of gifts, and old and young are intently studying what they can bestow upon their friends as a token of affectionate remembrance. It is pleasant to receive a gift, however small, from those we love. It is an assurance that we are not forgotten, and seems to bind us to them a little closer.—[The Review and Herald, December 26, 1882.](#)

Then she counsels, “Brethren and sisters, while you are devising gifts for one another, I would remind you of our heavenly Friend.... Will He not be pleased if we show that we have not forgotten Him?”

Practical Gift Suggestions

In the setting of the gift-giving at the Christmas season, she made some suggestions:

It is right to bestow upon one another tokens of love and remembrance if we do not in this forget God, our best friend. We should make our gifts such as will prove a real benefit to the receiver. I would recommend such books as will be an aid in understanding the Word of God, or that will increase our love for its precepts. Provide something to be read during these long winter evenings.—[Ibid.](#)

She recommended books she herself admired and had been referring to as she was writing on the great controversy theme and on New Testament history:

For those who can procure it, D’Aubigne’s *History of the Reformation* will be both interesting and profitable. From this work we may gain some knowledge of what has been accomplished in the past in the great work of reform. We can see how God poured light into

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the minds of those who searched His Word, how much the men ordained and sent forth by Him were willing to suffer for the truth's sake, and how hard it is for the great mass of mankind to renounce their errors and to receive and obey the teachings of the Scriptures....

Many of our people already have the *Life of Christ* [Geikie]. *The Life of Paul* [Conybeare and Howson], now offered for sale at this office, is another useful and deeply interesting work which should be widely circulated.—*Ibid.* (Geikie advertised in *Ibid.*, November 7, 1882).

She mentioned also as appropriate the *Testimonies* and the three volumes of *Spirit of Prophecy*, and suggested children's books as appropriate reading—all available from the publishing houses, east and west.

Spirit of Prophecy, Volume 4

Now she was deeply engrossed in writing and preparing manuscripts for two books, *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 4, and *Sketches From the Life of Paul*.

When plans were laid in the late 1860s for the *Spirit of Prophecy* series, it was at first envisioned as books of about 400 pages each. Volume 1, dealing with Old Testament history and published in 1870, made a book of 414 pages. When she wrote New Testament history, it was found that two volumes were needed, one with 396 pages depicting the life of Christ from His birth to the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the other with the events of Christ's Passion Week to His ascension and then taking up briefly the work of the apostles. These were published in 1877 and 1878. James and Ellen White hoped that the closing book of the series would be in the field without too much delay, but through the last two years of his life she could do but little with it. This remained the situation for the first year after his death.

In an endeavor to keep the volumes close to the 400-page mark, volume 3 was held to 392 pages. This cut the story off in the midst of Paul's ministry, leaving him in Thessalonica. It was her plan to

begin volume 4 at this point, and she continued writing five more chapters on this basis. These books were planned for Seventh-day Adventist reading. A uniform size for the books was considered important, as was the \$1-per-volume price. But God had other plans; Ellen White was instructed through vision to adopt the format now seen in *The Great Controversy*. The fourth volume was to begin with the account of the destruction of Jerusalem. She followed this instruction. The five unused chapters on New Testament history were included in the second printing of volume 3, even though it made a book of 442 pages.

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Instructed to Trace the History of the Controversy

It was revealed to Ellen White that she should present an outline of the controversy between Christ and Satan, as it developed in the first centuries of the Christian era and in the great Reformation of the sixteenth century, in such a way as to prepare the mind of the reader to understand clearly the controversy going on in the present day. Writing of this in 1888 as she had occasion (just four years after its issuance) to enlarge and revise volume 4, she explained:

As the Spirit of God has opened to my mind the great truths of His Word, and the scenes of the past and the future, I have been bidden to make known to others that which has thus been revealed—to trace the history of the controversy in past ages, and especially so to present it as to shed a light on the fast approaching struggle of the future.

In pursuance of this purpose, I have endeavored to select and group together events in the history of the church in such a manner as to trace the unfolding of the great testing truths that at different periods have been given to the world, that have excited the wrath of Satan, and the enmity of a world-loving church....

In these records we may see the foreshadowing of the conflict before us. Regarding them in the light of God's Word, and by the illumination of His Spirit, we may see unveiled the devices of the wicked one.... The

great events which have marked the progress of reform in past ages, are matters of history, well known and universally acknowledged by the Protestant world; they are facts which none can gainsay. This history I have presented briefly, in accordance with the scope of the book, and the brevity which must necessarily be observed, the facts having been condensed into as little space as seemed consistent with a proper understanding of their application.—[The Great Controversy](#), xi.

Chapters Published in *Signs of the Times*

[213] Many of the chapters of the *Spirit of Prophecy* volumes on the life of Christ had appeared, while in preparation, in *Signs of the Times*. Ellen White now decided to follow the same plan as she wrote the chapters for volume 4. Just where she may have begun her writing for the book is unknown. She mentions doing such writing two years before James White's death. Now in 1883, the May 31 issue of the *Signs* carried as its lead article the beginning of a series of 20 articles featuring Martin Luther as the central figure in the Protestant Reformation. In preparing this material for publication, she was fulfilling the commission "to trace the history of the controversy in past ages," selecting and grouping "events in the history of the church." Much of this history had passed before her in vision, but not all the details, and not always in its precise sequence. In a statement read at Autumn Council of the General Conference Committee on October 30, 1911—a statement that had been carefully read by Ellen White and carried her written endorsement—W. C. White spoke of how she received light on Reformation history and the manner in which the writings of others were an aid to her in this work.

The things which she has written out, are descriptions of flashlight pictures and other representations given her regarding the actions of men, and the influence of these actions upon the work of God for the salvation of men, with views of past, present, and future history in its relation to this work.

In connection with the writing out of these views, she has made use of good and clear historical statements to help make plain to the reader the things which she is endeavoring to present. When I was a mere boy, I heard her read D'Aubigne's *History of the Reformation* to my father. She read to him a large part, if not the whole, of the five volumes. She has read other histories of the Reformation. This has helped her to locate and describe many of the events and the movements presented to her in vision.

This is somewhat similar to the way in which the study of the Bible helps her to locate and describe the many figurative representations given to her regarding the development of the great controversy in our day between truth and error.—[Selected Messages 3:437](#).

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, in 1882 and 1883 Ellen White had within easy reach the volumes of D'Aubigne's *History of the Reformation*. She recommended them as appropriate Christmas gifts in her *Review* article. She pointed out that they were interesting and profitable and a source of valuable knowledge of God's hand in Reformation days. [214]

The *Review and Herald* frequently carried advertisements for D'Aubigne's books, and Butler, in the March 13 *Review*, urged Adventists to secure and read them. A notice on the back page of the same issue of the *Review* advertised the set of books, normally selling for \$5, as available for \$4.

The Relation of Ellen White's Articles to D'Aubigne

All this publicity and urging Seventh-day Adventists to secure and read D'Aubigne's works on the Reformation is significant in view of the suggestion that in her tracing the history of the controversy she plagiarized the works of other authors. It is clear that she did make use of the writings of others in her narrative. But there was nothing surreptitious about it, and her use of the writings of others in no way injured the income from these standard works to their authors.

As she penned the Luther story, she had at hand a condensation of D'Aubigne's work that she found most helpful. A notation in her handwritten manuscript on Luther gives a lead to this: "*See Words That Shook the World*, 240 pages." She was here referring to a volume in her library written by Charles Adams: *Words That Shook the World; or, Martin Luther, His Own Biographer. Being Pictures of the Great Reformer Sketched Mainly From His Own Sayings* (New York: Carlton and Porter, 1858). In his preface Adams informs the reader: "For most of the sketches herein comprised I am indebted mainly to the work of D'Aubigne, from whose voluminous and captivating pages I have endeavored to draw forth the subject of my book, and, with a style and brevity suited to youthful readers, set him forth for their contemplation." In her writing on Luther for the series of *Signs* articles, she found this condensation of D'Aubigne helpful and copied some, paraphrased some, and gave some in her own words.

Through 1883 Ellen White was optimistic about the early completion of volume 4. On March 17 she wrote to J. N. Andrews in Switzerland:

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I have not been able to write many letters on account of the effort I am making to get off volume 4. I am making good headway on this book, and four weeks, I think, will complete it.—[Letter 9, 1883](#).

On July 3, while in Oakland hurrying the publication of the *Testimony for the Battle Creek Church*, she wrote her helper, Mrs. Ings, "I am in a hurry to get all settled down and rush this book." Marian, she said, "can press ...volume 4" ([Letter 13, 1883](#)). But in mid-August, with Butler urging her to help with the camp meetings, the unfinished work was laid aside to wait until the next year.

Sketches from the Life of Paul

There was one new E. G. White book that, in addition to the 244-page *Testimony* No. 31, was published in 1883. It was entitled *Sketches From the Life of Paul*. It had an interesting history. [The Review and Herald, January 16, 1883](#), carried a note that the

Sabbath school lessons beginning with the second quarter would be on the book of Acts of the Apostles. For collateral reading the two publishing houses offered copies of the popular standard work *Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, by the British clergymen W. J. Conybeare and J. S. Howson, as premiums with their respective journals (*Ibid.*, January 2, 1883; *The Signs of the Times*, January 11, 1883). Not carrying an American copyright, the book had been picked up by several American publishers and had been issued in inexpensive popular editions, some of which could be secured for \$1 per copy. Several thousand copies were distributed among Adventist readers. Just at this time Ellen White was adding to what she had written on the apostle Paul in her six chapters at the close of *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 3. She greatly valued the Conybeare and Howson book, and as a part of an advertisement for it, wrote this communication:

The Life of St. Paul, by Conybeare and Howson, I regard as a book of great merit, and one of rare usefulness to the earnest student of the New Testament history.—*Ibid.*, February 22, 1883

The Call for an Ellen G. White Lesson Help

Soon Adventists familiar with Ellen White's lucid style of writing in the several chapters on Paul at the close of *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 3, were clamoring for a book from her pen on the subject. In response she took the published chapters and then prepared more material for a volume entitled *Sketches From the Life of Paul*. This 334-page volume, containing thirty-two chapters, was published in early June, 1883, to be used as a help for the Sabbath school lessons, which would run for another year. [216]

As Ellen White prepared these materials, she had at hand both the Conybeare and Howson book and Farrar's *Life and Work of St. Paul*. She made some use of words and phrases from each. In this she was doing much as did the British authors. Howson, in a footnote to chapter 2, admitted gaining "useful suggestions" and in some cases adopting the "very words" from unnamed "modern Jews" (Conybeare and Howson, *Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, vol. 1,

p. 34, note). (See F. D. Nichol, *Ellen G. White and Her Critics*, pp. 424, 425.)

Sizable editions of the E. G. White book *Sketches From the Life of Paul* were published by both the Pacific Press and the Review and Herald (MKW to WCW, June 5, 1883), and it was received with great favor. Wrote Butler after reading the book:

We obtained a volume as soon as it was accessible to us, and have read it through with the deepest interest. To those familiar with her writings, it is unnecessary to say that the language is beautiful, clear, and most forcible. It is indeed written in her very best style, which is a very high commendation. It seems to me that no one can read this book without being made better by it.

Though covering the same ground, and mentioning the same things contained in the Acts of the Apostles, yet there is a great flood of light thrown upon that narrative, bringing out most clearly many interesting circumstances, holding up to view many causes and effects which would not be discerned by the ordinary reader. Here is the great force of Sister White's writings, covering Bible subjects.—[The Review and Herald, July 24, 1883.](#)

[217] For nearly two decades the book was available from the publishers. When stocks ran out, Ellen White was asked about its continuation. She recognized that it was not a full treatment of the experience brought to view in the New Testament Acts of the Apostles, nor did it contain comments on the Epistles written by others than Paul. As she hoped before too long to fill in the gap between *The Desire of Ages* and *The Great Controversy*, she did not give approval for continued printings.

It took her much longer than was anticipated to get to the task of filling in this gap. Not till the year 1911 was her 630-page book *The Acts of the Apostles* published. This lapse of time gave opportunity for rumors to be circulated, particularly that the book had been withdrawn from the market because of threatened legal action by the publishers of the Conybeare and Howson book. That such a rumor

was pure fiction is demonstrated by the following letter of January 18, 1924, from the publishers of the edition the Review and Herald and the Pacific Press used as premiums in early 1883:

Dear Sir,

Your letter of January 15 received.

We publish Conybeare's *Life and Epistles of the Apostle Paul*, but this is not a copyrighted book and we would have no legal grounds for action against your book and we do not think we have ever raised any objection or made any claim such as you speak of....

Very truly yours,

Thomas Y. Crowell Company

Nichol, *op. cit.*, p. 456 (see also DF, p. 389).

Testimonies for the Church, Volumes 1 to 4

From the publication of the first *Testimony* pamphlet in 1855, important instruction, admonition, encouragement, and reproof reached the church through thirty-one *Testimony* pamphlets, each of sixteen pages to 240 pages. In 1878 the General Conference session voted that these materials should be kept in print and made available to the church in a more permanent form.

In the early 1880s the publishers and Ellen White were faced with dwindling stocks. In late 1881 Marian Davis and Willie and Mary White began giving attention to what might be needed in the way of revising the wording, correcting imperfect grammar, or making clear the meaning intended by Ellen White. As the work was done, type was set and printing plates were made.

While W. C. White was in Battle Creek at the 1881 General Conference session, Mary wrote to him:

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Yours from Battle Creek containing instruction concerning the *Testimonies* came to hand last evening. Your suggestion to insert the volume and number in running title we all think good....

With regard to changes, we will try to profit by your suggestions. The fear that we may make too many changes or in some way change the sense haunts me day and night.—MKW to WCW, January 7, 1882.

Three weeks later Mary wrote a progress report: “There are now a little more than three hundred pages of the first volume of *Testimonies* electrotyped [in printing plates]. There is some more in type and much more prepared.”—MKW to WCW, January 29, 1882. Work on this task progressed as other tasks allowed. On November 29 Mary wrote of what seemed to her and others of the need for some explanatory notes, and suggested following the style of Geikie in numbering such notes. In May, 1883, she was working on a subject index for volume 1 of the *Testimonies*, which she thought would “be of great value if done right” (MKW to WCW, May 13, 1883).

When W. C. White and his mother went to the General Conference session in Battle Creek in November, 1883, he took with him a report of the work in preparing the *Testimonies* for publication in convenient permanent form. He called for a resolution of explanation and General Conference support. Here is the action taken on the last day of the session:

Whereas, Some of the bound volumes of the *Testimonies for the Church* are out of print, so that full sets cannot be obtained at the office; and—

Whereas, There is a constant and urgent call for the reprinting of these volumes; therefore—*Resolved*, That we recommend their republication in such a form as to make four volumes of seven or eight hundred pages each.

Whereas, Many of these testimonies were written under the most unfavorable circumstances, the writer being too heavily pressed with anxiety and labor to devote critical thought to the grammatical perfection of the writings, and they were printed in such haste as to allow these imperfections to pass uncorrected; and—

Whereas, We believe the light given by God to His servants is by the enlightenment of the mind, thus im-

parting the thoughts, and not (except in rare cases) the very words in which the ideas should be expressed; therefore—

Resolved, That in the republication of these volumes such verbal changes be made as to remove the above-named imperfections, as far as possible, without in any measure changing the thought; and further

Resolved, That this body appoint a committee of five to take charge of the republication of these volumes according to the above preambles and resolutions.—

[Ibid.](#), November 27, 1883

Butler appointed the committee, as follows: W. C. White, Uriah Smith, J. H. Waggoner, S. N. Haskell, and himself ([Ibid.](#)).

The General Conference on Record Regarding Inspiration

This was a time when the work of Ellen White was being carefully scrutinized and consideration was given to inspiration-revelation as it related to her experience and writings. The action taken at the session to deal with faulty grammar and to clarify some statements was to become very important to Seventh-day Adventists, for it puts on record the position of the church that has been a benchmark in dealing with the question of inspiration.

The work of preparing the testimonies for publication in four volumes proceeded, culminating in their publication in 1885.

One other task called for immediate attention if the provisions of the General Conference session, as they related to the E. G. White books, were to be carried out. Her writing on the life of Christ, as it appeared in *Spirit of Prophecy*, volumes 2 and 3, was to be prepared for publication in a single volume. This was to be translated in the languages of Europe, providing books that could be sold to the general public. The editorial task was assigned to Marian Davis. She began this at once, for A. B. Oyen was to begin translating the Danish-Norwegian edition almost immediately (MKW to WCW, December 6, 1883).

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Chapter 18—(1883) The Spirit of Prophecy Challenged

Spending a weekend in Ukiah, fifty miles north of Healdsburg, in early December, 1882, Ellen White learned of a “storm of calumny and reviling” that troubled the new little company of believers there. She wrote:

Our hearts are made glad as we see this little center of converts to the truth advancing step by step, growing stronger amid opposition. They are becoming better acquainted with the suffering part of religion. Our Saviour instructed His disciples that they should be despised for His name’s sake. “Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.”—[Manuscript 5, 1882](#).

In part this opposition was because of the maintaining by Seventh-day Adventists that the gift of the Spirit of Prophecy is present in the church. “Everything has been said about me that could be,” she commented ([Letter 24, 1882](#)).

Usually a firsthand acquaintance with Ellen White sufficed to counter many of the objections raised against her. At Ukiah, arrangements were made for her to speak to the townspeople in the courthouse in the evening after the Sabbath and again Sunday night. “The courthouse was crowded,” she reported ([Ibid.](#)). As she wrote of the experience she declared:

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Our work is to sow the seed, not knowing which shall prosper, this or that. Our work is not to meet and contradict the variety of false statements men will make about me and my work. These men, professing to be messengers of God, publish and preach that which is most agreeable to their own natures; they pour out from

unsanctified hearts and lips the basest falsehoods, that have no foundation in truth.

Why don't you meet them? Why don't you resort to the law? says one. This is not my work. I ask, Did Jesus do this when He was on earth? He had to meet just such things. He was abused and insulted. He was reviled, but He reviled not again. He was pursued with falsehood and with calumny. He passed on, doing His work with fidelity whether meeting censure or praise.—

[Manuscript 5, 1882.](#)

The activities of Ellen White in California through the winter, spring, and summer of 1883 were described by the editor of the *Signs of the Times*, J. H. Waggoner:

Although Sister White has been some time in California she has kept so steadily at writing at her home in Healdsburg that we have seen her very seldom, and the church has not been often favored with her personal labors. Indeed, her writing has so engrossed her time and attention that she has done comparatively little traveling and speaking in this State since the camp meeting [at Hanford, May 10-16, 1881]. But we never saw a time when her labor was better appreciated here than the present.—[The Signs of the Times, August 16, 1883.](#)

The Intensity of the Warfare

She was aware, of course, of the warfare against her work, and particularly alert to the deplorable conditions existing in the Battle Creek church. With the closing of the college in the summer of 1882, the outgoing president, Dr. McLearn, and his family remained in the city for some months, seemingly at a loss to know what to do. Matters were greatly complicated by the sympathetic attitude Uriah Smith and the Battle Creek church had toward him. McLearn declared that he had been treated unfairly, even though his salary of \$800 a year exceeded that of any other Seventh-day Adventist executive or minister. He threatened to bring suit against the church

[222] and declared he would publish against Seventh-day Adventists if justice, as he saw it, was not done to him at the forthcoming General Conference session. Wrote G. I. Butler to Ellen White on November 28, 1882: “He has no faith, whatever, in the *Testimonies*, I think, and looking at things as he does, it will be a hard matter to hold on long.”

Butler thought McLearn would soon affiliate with the Seventh Day Baptists, which he eventually did, but not before linking up for a time with the split-off group at Marion, Iowa. In this, a Seventh-day Adventist attorney of Battle Creek, J. S. Green, joined him. Working with A. C. Long, of the Church of God, Adventist, the two engaged in writing articles and tracts against Ellen White and the administration of the Seventh-day Adventist Church that were widely distributed, especially among Adventists.

G. W. Amadon stated: “Such an outburst of malevolence would hardly be expected in his [McLearn’s] case.”—RH, Supplement, August 14, 1883.

The republication in 1882 of the three earliest E. G. White works in *Early Writings* triggered the Church of God group, joined by McLearn and Green, to a new attack in their church organ, the *Sabbath Advocate*. In the spring of 1883, A. C. Long issued a sixteen-page pamphlet titled “Comparison of the Early Writings of Mrs. White With Later Publications.” Then the trio of dissidents united in the production of an “Extra” of the *Sabbath Advocate*, in which were presented a number of criticisms of Ellen White. At first the criticism was ignored. Then its wide distribution, especially among Adventists, gave rise to questions demanding answers. The first answer came from the pen of Wolcott Littlejohn in the *Review* in May, 1883.

The Beginning of a Turnaround in Battle Creek

To aid in the crisis situation at Battle Creek, Littlejohn had been asked in January to take charge of “District No. 3.” The Battle Creek church, with its 497 members ([The Review and Herald, April 17, 1883](#)), comprised the largest part of the district. This was done with the understanding that he would take “the special oversight of that church” ([Ibid., January 30, 1883](#)). Within two weeks it was

announced that he would “render special assistance on the *Review*,” signing articles W. H. L. (*Ibid.*, February 13, 1883). This move was made to bring in a more positive influence in the Battle Creek church and in the contents of the *Review*. On February 18, Butler wrote to Ellen White of this move, declaring, “Brother Littlejohn [223] seems to be decided on the right side and to be firm and clear-sighted. He expressed himself as fearful of a great crisis in the near future.” Testifying to the effectiveness of his ministry is a news note in the *Review* of April 17 titled, “Bright Spots in Battle Creek,” in which it is reported:

On Sunday afternoon [April 8] a large percentage of the members of the church convened in the auditorium of the Tabernacle to attend to the business of the regular church quarterly meeting. On that occasion resolutions were passed acknowledging the truthfulness of the testimony which condemned the church for the course pursued by them in the college troubles, and expressing an earnest desire for the reopening of the college in the near future, and pledging a hearty support to the trustees in carrying out whatever plan they may adopt for the management of the school.

On a previous occasion resolutions had been passed by the church, expressing an earnest desire that Elder G. I. Butler [who was residing in South Lancaster so that his children could be in an Adventist school] should return to this place, and favor the church with his valuable labors. At this time a letter was read from him acknowledging the receipt of the resolutions, and expressing his intention to return to Battle Creek at no distant date.—*Ibid.*, April 17, 1883

Then on a triumphant note the report concludes: “On the whole, the cloud seems to be lifting, and sunshine of God’s favor to be resting again upon the church.”

With a strong base of support in the majority of the church officers and members, Littlejohn began to get positive materials into the *Review*. The issue of May 8 carried the first of a series of

three rather scholarly articles on “Seventh-day Adventists and the Testimony of Jesus Christ.”

[224] The way was being prepared for a comprehensive, sound answer to the blast from Marion, Iowa, in the “Extra” of the *Sabbath Advocate*. On August 14, 1883, a sixteen-page *Review and Herald* supplement was published, dealing with the main issues raised by the Church of God writers. The entire issue of 624 column inches was given to a defense of Ellen White and the Spirit of Prophecy. It included items from such men as Uriah Smith and W. C. Gage, whose influence had been something less than in full support of the Spirit of Prophecy and the stance of church administration.

The comparatively short items contributed by Smith and Gage expressed their position on Ellen White’s visions, claiming confidence and support but expressing their viewpoints, which were somewhat at variance from those held by the body of Adventists.

Butler came out strongly in full support of the Spirit of Prophecy as represented in Ellen White and her work. In the heart of one six-column article titled “The Visions: How They Are Held Among Seventh-day Adventists,” he declared:

They have always been held in high esteem by the most zealous and humble among us from the start. They have first called attention to every important move we have made in advance. Our publishing work, the health and temperance movement, the college, and the cause of advanced education, the missionary enterprise, and many other important points have owed their efficiency largely to this influence.

We have found in a long, varied, and, in some instances, sad experience, the value of their counsel. When we have heeded them, we have prospered; when we have slighted them, we have suffered a great loss.—
RH, Supplement, August 14, 1883.

Ellen White Enters the Fray

Seldom did Ellen White pause to notice criticism of her work. But in this instance she felt she should say something that would be

helpful to those meeting the charges brought against her. In early August she wrote an article for the *Review and Herald*, recognizing the conflict and reminding the readers that this was the kind of situation she had met from beginning days. The article, titled “Our Present Position,” was published in the issue of August 28, 1883. Early in the article she observed:

There are many who consider it a mark of intelligence to doubt, and they pride themselves upon their ability to devise objections to God’s Word, to His truth, or to those who proclaim it.—[Ibid., August 28, 1883.](#)

Coming more to the point, she admonished:

Brethren and sisters, let not your souls be disturbed by the efforts of those who so earnestly seek to arouse distrust and suspicion of Sister White. These attacks have been repeated hundreds of times during the past forty years; but my labors have not ceased; the voice of warning, reproof, and encouragement has not been silenced. The evil reports framed concerning me have injured those who circulated them; but have not destroyed my work.

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Before some of these opposers had an existence, I was shown what would come, and from what source. In the day of God, those who have been seeking to prove me a deceiver must answer for their course....

Many ask, Why do you not contradict these reports? Why allow them to be circulated? The same question has been asked again and again for the last forty years. My answer is, in the language of one of old, I am doing a great work and cannot come down.—[Ibid.](#)

In words of assurance she declared:

Brethren and sisters, have no fears that I shall become disheartened by the cruel attacks of my enemies. I expect them in greater measure, and only wonder that they have not been more frequent. Think of Jesus. How

much was said against Him.... The adversary of souls is constantly seeking to divert our minds by bringing in side issues. Let us not be deceived. Let enemies handle your name and mine as they please. Let them distort, misrepresent our words and deeds. Let them fabricate falsehoods as best pleases them....

Leave Sister White in the hands of God. If the work in which she is engaged be of God, it will prosper; otherwise it will come to naught. But remember that your own eternal interests are now at stake....

Many are in reality fighting his [Satan's] battles while they profess to serve under the banner of Christ. These traitors in the camp may not be suspected, but they are doing their work to create unbelief, discord, and strife. Such are the most dangerous of foes. While they insinuate themselves into our favor, and gain our confidence and sympathy, they are busy suggesting doubts and creating suspicion. They work in the same manner as did Satan in heaven when he deceived the angels by his artful representations.—[Ibid.](#)

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To Smith she declared of the publishing of the *Sabbath Advocate*:

I hear the muttering of the dragon from Marion, but I expected worse than this because it is not the men who do this, but Satan behind them. They are merely men, but agents of Satan. It is his power we meet in them.—[Letter 14, 1883.](#)

In an unusual move, she paused in her book preparation and wrote a sixteen-page explanation and defense. It opened:

My attention has recently been called to a sixteen-page pamphlet published by A. C. Long, of Marion, Iowa, entitled “Comparison of the Early Writings of Mrs. White With Later Publications.” The writer states that portions of my earlier visions, as first printed, have been suppressed in the work recently published under

the title *Early Writings of Mrs. E. G. White*, and he conjectures as a reason for such suppression that these passages teach doctrines now repudiated by us as a people. He also charges us with willful deception in representing *Early Writings* as a complete republication of my earliest views, with only verbal changes from the original work.

Before I note separately the passages which are said to have been omitted [as she does in this statement], it is proper that several facts be stated.—[Manuscript 4, 1883](#) (published in full in [Selected Messages 1:59-73](#)).

The prime question related to her first vision as published in 1847 as an article in the James White pamphlet *A Word to the "Little Flock"*. In a move to inform those who questioned the precise wording, the Review and Herald reprinted the article in full and advertised it for sale for 3 cents a copy ([The Review and Herald, August 28, 1883](#)).

Through the winter and early spring of 1883 Ellen White had kept close to her writing as she was striving to finish her work on *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 4, and to complete the book on the life and teachings of the apostle Paul. Butler was eager to have her attend camp meetings during the summer. On February 18, 1883, he wrote to her:

How much I wish you might get volume 4 out this winter so you could labor in the camp meetings the coming year. Your labors are greatly needed in several conferences. I think your labors would be highly appreciated by most of our people.

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As summer came and her book work was going well, she fixed her eyes on the dates for the Eastern camp meetings to start August 22 at Worcester, Massachusetts. Finally, her communication to the president of the General Conference led him to feel he could count on her help. He notified the readers of the *August 7 Review and Herald* that "Sister E. G. White may be able to attend [the New England meeting], if her health is sufficient to endure the long journey from California."

With Sara McEnterfer as a traveling companion, Ellen White left California by train for Battle Creek. She arrived Friday, August 17. She went to the home of Edson and Emma for the night and then to the Sanitarium. Almost immediately she was involved in meetings.

The Weekend in Battle Creek

Being in Battle Creek brought back many memories, and she did not sleep well that Friday night. Sabbath morning she spoke in the Tabernacle, and Sunday morning to the workers in the Review and Herald office. She described that meeting in a letter to William and Mary in Oakland:

I spoke to the workers in the Review office in regard to the first efforts made in Battle Creek in the publishing department. About eighty assembled. How small was the beginning of the work, and how limited the wages received! What self-denial and self-sacrifice had to be exercised to carry on the work! ...I spoke about an hour. This was to me a very precious meeting.—[Letter 23, 1883](#).

[228] Sunday was a full day. In the afternoon at four o'clock she spoke in the public square on temperance, to a crowd of about four hundred. She had an appointment to speak to the patients at the Sanitarium Sunday evening. About three hundred crowded into the parlor, spilling out into the hall and porch. She was pleased at the reception of her remarks and reported that the atmosphere at the Sanitarium, as far as religious interest was concerned, was in every way improved. She credited this to the efforts of Lucinda Hall, now the matron, and Mrs. Sawyer (*Ibid.*).

Getting the feel of things in Battle Creek, Ellen White decided to meet a second time with the employees of the Review and Herald. She could do this Monday evening, August 20. Uriah Smith's rather cool attitude toward Ellen White and her work could be felt by those who worked around him at the publishing house. She would be leaving in a day or two for camp meetings in New England. The *Review* of August 7 had announced that Smith would attend

these meetings, but at the last minute he felt he must remain in Battle Creek and attend to some important writing. Her report on her second meeting at the Review office reveals the thrust of her remarks:

Monday evening, August 20, I spoke again to those employed at the Review office. I deeply felt the need of a reformation, a transformation of character, with all connected with the publishing house. Unless they would fight the battles of the Lord and gain the victory over self and sin, they could not win the crown of life.—[The Review and Herald, October 16, 1883.](#)

She urged all to act from principle and to place themselves decidedly on the side of right. Then, introducing an effective object lesson, she said:

Unbelief grows as naturally as thistle seed, which, blown here and there, takes root, vegetates, and produces yearly an increased harvest. I entreated all, for Christ's sake, to become established for themselves upon the sure word of prophecy. All should be able to give the reason of the hope that is within them. A vigilant foe is at work earnestly and untiringly, to weaken their confidence in God and the truth.

The most extravagant, inconsistent reports in regard to my position, my work, and my writings will be put in circulation. But those who have had an experience in this message, and have become acquainted with the character of my work, will not be affected by those things unless they themselves backslide from God, and become corrupted by the spirit of the world. Some will be deceived because of their own unfaithfulness. They want to believe a lie. Some have betrayed sacred, important trusts, and this is why they wander in the mazes of doubt....

There are some, even connected with our institutions, who are in great danger of making shipwreck of

faith. Satan will work in disguise, in his most deceptive manner, in these branches of God's work. He makes these important instrumentalities his special points of attack, and he will leave no means untried to cripple their usefulness. The same enemy that is even on my track will be on yours also. He will suggest, conjecture, fabricate all sorts of reports, and those who wish them true will believe them.

But be assured that the attacks of Satan will not turn me from the path of duty. The work committed to me forty years ago I must carry forward as long as life shall last. I will not shun to declare the whole counsel of God. Unpleasant as it may be, I must warn, reprove, rebuke, as God bids me, whether the carnal heart will accept or reject the words of warning.

For forty years, Satan has made the most determined efforts to cut off this testimony from the church; but it has continued from year to year to warn the erring, to unmask the deceiver, to encourage the desponding. My trust is in God. I have learned not to be surprised at opposition in any form or from almost any source. I expect to be betrayed, as was my Master, by professed friends.—[Ibid.](#)

Chapter 19—(1883) A Changing Battle Creek—the College Opens [230]

The week spent in Battle Creek indicated to Ellen White that while the battle was not yet won, there were encouraging changes.

Having in earnestness and kindness sounded a warning that she hoped would help to stabilize those who might have been wavering, she pressed on to Massachusetts. The camp meeting in Worcester opened Wednesday, August 22. Beginning with the Massachusetts meeting she had a full schedule until October 10: Vermont, Maine, New York, Nebraska, Michigan, and Indiana. Fellow laborers included Butler, Van Horn, and, for the three later meetings, Haskell.

As had become the practice, she was advertised as the Sunday afternoon speaker, with the public invited to hear her. Four thousand attended the Worcester meeting to hear her speak on Christian temperance in its broad aspects. When she came onto the grounds in Maine, the people were pleased to see that she was accompanied by one of her sisters ([The Signs of the Times, September 27, 1883](#)). At many of the camp meetings she would speak once each day and attend various auxiliary meetings, joining in with appropriate remarks or counsel. Haskell, who had recently come from California, reported in the *Signs of the Times*:

Our friends will be pleased to hear that Sister White has been specially sustained of God, and her testimony was never clearer and more powerful than upon this trip east. For all of these blessings we only say, Praise the Lord for His goodness manifested to His people.—October 18, 1883.

Battle Creek College Reopens

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With a more accurate comprehension of the whole situation on the part of the Battle Creek church, and upon its members making a thorough confession and a pledge of loyalty to the Spirit of

Prophecy and to church leadership, the board of trustees of Battle Creek College looked forward to the reopening of the college. Butler, chairman of the board, as well as president of the General Conference, presented an extended statement on the situation in the *Review* of July 31, 1883, under the title of "Our College at Battle Creek":

Let us consider some of the questions involved in the reopening of the college. It has remained closed for one year. Why? Because as conducted for some time previous to its closing, it did not answer the purpose for which it was established. And further, because the state of feeling existing in the community surrounding it was such that those to whom its management was entrusted felt that there was no reasonable hope that a better state of things could then be obtained....

The last year the college was opened a crisis was reached. The principal employed was a man of little experience in this message, who seemed to think he knew better what was needed than those of long experience in the work. His ideas were sanctioned by many of the church and many of the students. The wrong tendency above mentioned was greatly strengthened. The influence of some of the older teachers was cut off, and their lot made very bitter. The authority of the board of trustees was treated with contempt and defiance....

A very different spirit is manifest in the church at Battle Creek the present year from that which was seen last year. Many persons have expressed themselves as deeply regretting the course they pursued in the troubles of the college. We have met in our travels quite a number of our young men whose influence was cast against the board, who have come to us and expressed much regret at the course they pursued.... All these things prepare the way for the college to open with favorable prospects of success.

Yet there are great difficulties to be met if we have such a school as will meet the mind of the Spirit of God.

It will require men of sound judgment, deep piety, and those whose whole hearts are enlisted in the work of God, to mold and manage it, if it ever fully succeeds....

To bring about the true spirit in our college will require a great effort. To secure proper officers and teachers who will exert the right influences, and bring into the school the Spirit of Christ, and lead the minds of the pupils to the truth, is a difficult problem, and one which the board of trustees is now trying to solve. We hope for such success as will enable us soon to announce the time when our college will open.

[The Review and Herald, August 14, 1883](#), carried the announcement that Battle Creek College would open Wednesday, September 5, for the coming college year.

Eighty students were present for the opening. W. H. Littlejohn, who had shown his loyalty to the church and to the Spirit of Prophecy counsels, had been chosen president. He served for two years.

The operation of the college was in the hands of the SDA Educational Society; school matters would come to its attention at the annual meeting to be held during the General Conference session.

The Michigan Camp Meeting and the Uriah Smith Turnaround

After the distressing year in Michigan and particularly at Battle Creek, the Michigan camp meeting, held on the Battle Creek fairgrounds and billed as “The State Meeting,” was particularly significant. Smith, who had been under a cloud for months, presented an encouraging report of the meeting. There were one hundred and thirty family tents on the ground, with meetings held in the large 80-by-120-foot tent. About fifty ministers and licentiates were present, and some powerful sermons were preached. Smith reported that “a first-day Adventist minister who was present Sabbath and Sunday said that it seemed like 1844.” Smith added:

The presence of Brethren Haskell and W. C. White from the Pacific Coast added to the interest of the meeting.... The benefit of the labors and attendance of Sister

White at this meeting cannot be overestimated. Her exhortations moved the people to seek the Lord with earnestness and contrition of heart, as could have been done by no others. A meeting of this character on Monday forenoon which continued without intermission till nearly 2:00 P.M. was considered by some who have had large experience in religious things the most impressive occasion, and one marked by the most solemnity and power of any meeting they ever attended.—[Ibid., October 9, 1883](#)

Smith continued his comments on the importance and effect of Ellen White's ministry, which clearly betokened a change of attitude on his part. He wrote from personal experience:

Sister White has a work to do, and is trying faithfully to perform it, which no others can do. It is one which has a most intimate connection with the prosperity of the cause. For this she is especially qualified by the gift she has in exercise of "visions and revelations of the Lord." Through this she is able to perceive more vividly the dangers and duties pertaining to these closing moments of time, and thus more understandingly instruct and warn the little flock; and he who would try to destroy confidence in her work, or weaken her hands, is taking a course hostile to the best interests of this cause....

From the very beginning, now nearly forty years ago, the manifestation of the Spirit of Prophecy in the visions of Sister White has been connected with this work, and interwoven with every step of its progress. To suppose that during the brief time remaining it is to be separated from it would be took for a singular providence indeed. A change in this respect is now no more possible than it is desirable.

Rather than stop now to question the wisdom of God's providence, in the constitution or history of this work, and spend time and strength in efforts to introduce fundamental changes, we think all would do better to

accept it as a whole, give their attention to a careful examination of their own hearts in view of the soon-coming judgment, and be willing to receive instruction from whatever source, and by whatever means the Lord may see fit to send it.

If the work of the ministry, as Paul wrote to Timothy, is, among other things, to “reprove, rebuke, exhort,” it would not be strange if this should be a characteristic of a special gift in the church; and if to refuse to receive instruction from the faithful minister would be to neglect duty and suffer spiritual loss, it would, in the other case, be no less so.—[Ibid.](#)

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Using his editorial report on the Michigan camp meeting to herald to the church the marked change that had come in his personal relationship to the Spirit of Prophecy, Smith stated:

Reference to Sister White’s labors at the camp meeting has led us to this digression, in which we have taken occasion to state more fully than in the recent *Review Supplement* our position on a question which has been the cause of no little agitation of late in some quarters.—[Ibid.](#)

In closing his report and personal confession, he wrote significantly:

To return to the meeting, we believe its influence will be to consolidate the work in this State, and bind the hearts of the brethren more closely together. It is one Lord, one cause, and one people. The remnant are going through together, not in straggling squads or hostile sections. Happy will it be for those people who can say, This cause is my cause, and this people is my people.—[Ibid.](#)

What a victory had been won. The cause of God now entered a new day. Some time after this Smith wrote at length in the *Review*

and *Herald* Extra about his experience in going through a period of doubt in his relation to the *Testimonies*, as mentioned in an earlier chapter (page 200—see page 493, Appendix, for the full statement).

Following the camp meeting, a Bible reading institute arranged by the Michigan Conference was carried through successfully. Ellen White came often and spoke in the meetings about the general interests of the cause. Reportedly, her testimony was accompanied by the Spirit of God ([The Signs of the Times, November 22, 1883](#)).

[235] In the interval between the camp meeting and the institute, word was received of the death of the church's first missionary to be sent overseas, J. N. Andrews, in Basel, Switzerland. The life of this faithful servant of God was cut short by tuberculosis at the age of 54.

The 1883 General Conference Session

The General Conference session convened Thursday, November 8. A tender and harmonious spirit prevailed from the first. George Butler, in his opening address, referred to recent experiences in the attacks made on the visions and the Spirit of Prophecy:

The bitter opposition waged against us this year is another source of encouragement. The opposition on the subject of spiritual gifts has created a great interest on that subject, and we should be preparing, by the publication of suitable works, to meet a still greater opposition in this direction in the near future.—[The Review and Herald, November 20, 1883](#).

Ellen White spoke to the ministers each morning. Writing to an Adventist businessman in Oakland near the close of the session, she reported:

The Lord has blessed me greatly since these meetings have been in progress. We have had meetings for the ministers every morning at five o'clock and I have been able to attend and speak a short time to them. I have had special words given me as they were needed....

Our brethren are learning the simple art of believing as well as confessing their sins.—[Letter 15a, 1883](#).

Concerning the session, she declared, “There is a spirit of sweet amity and love among our ministering brethren. Business meetings move off harmoniously.”—[Ibid](#). The conference session, together with the auxiliary meetings, ran the full twenty days as planned.

Crucial Meeting of the Educational Society

At the meeting of the S.D.A. Educational Society, held on November 14, the time was given (after the disposing of financial matters) to reports from President Littlejohn. W. C. and Ellen G. White then spoke about the college and educational interests. Ellen White’s carefully followed remarks were summed up in the report of the meeting.

Referring to the opening of the college, the influences which led to its closing, and its recent reopening, Sister White expressed the hope that the blessing of God would attend the work there, so that it might carry out the design for which it was started. The object of having a college was to furnish a place where the young could be educated to go out and labor for God. Even as the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, so the Bible should be studied in order to gain an education that will be of lasting benefit to the young. The time should be divided up between study and work, so as to furnish physical as well as mental development, and better advancement would be seen if this plan were followed out.—[The Review and Herald, December 4, 1883](#).

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The naming of the appropriate committees signaled a notable change of attitude of one key figure at the headquarters of the church—Uriah Smith. The committee on resolutions, a very important committee at just this time, was named: W. C. White, Uriah Smith, and W. H. Littlejohn. What an omen for better days! The resolutions they laid before the constituency of the Educational Society were equally significant:

Resolved, That we express our gratitude to God for the reopening of our college, and that we recognize His hand in the rapid increase in the number of students since the commencement of the present term, and the exceptional good order which has characterized their department thus far.

Whereas, In our last annual session a resolution was passed to the effect that the trustees make provision for a suitable boardinghouse for the students; also for the performance of manual labor on the part of the students; and, as far as possible, for the conducting of the college upon a plan which shall harmonize in all respects with the light which God has given us upon this point through the *Testimonies*; and—

Whereas, The carrying out of that resolution will involve the expenditure of \$15,000 to \$20,000; therefore—

Resolved, We proceed to raise \$25,000 during the coming year, in subscriptions to the capital stock, to be used in paying the present indebtedness and in making the proposed improvements.—[Ibid.](#)

[237] It was recognized that the main purpose of the college was to train ministers, missionaries, colporteurs, Bible “readers” (instructors), and teachers for auxiliary schools. A new day had dawned for Battle Creek College.

Conference Session Actions

Many facets of the work of the church were considered and acted upon at this session. The General Conference Committee was enlarged from three members to five. George I. Butler was reelected president, Uriah Smith chosen secretary, and A. R. Henry, an Adventist banker from Iowa, treasurer. The new executive committee consisted of Butler, Haskell, W. C. White, J. Fargo, and O. A. Olsen. Ellen White, whose ordination was at the hands of God and not men, was given ministerial credentials.

At the last service, Tuesday night, November 20, W. C. White and A. B. Oyen were ordained to the gospel ministry, followed by a short address by Ellen White.

Among the resolutions passed were several that indicated a firming up of the attitudes on the Spirit of Prophecy.

Actions Relating to the E. G. White Books

Early in the session, action was taken to publish, in the Danish-Norwegian language, a book comprising the major portions of volumes 2 and 3 of *Spirit of Prophecy*, to be known as *The Life of Christ*. Already available in this language was a volume of a sketch of Ellen White's life and various extracts from her writings, which had been well received. It was recommended at this session that the sketch of her life and *The Life of Christ* be published in French, German, and Swedish. These actions called for competent translators, and those present felt the work could best be done in Europe. They voted that A. B. Oyen go at his earliest convenience to Europe. There he could engage in translating with the help of the best scholars and J. G. Matteson ([Ibid.](#), November 20, 1883).

An action taken on Tuesday, November 13, helped to strengthen the publishing interests in Europe:

Whereas, It is evident that it will soon be necessary to take advance steps in the way of establishing publishing interests in Europe; and—

Whereas, Brother W. C. White has had experience in this branch of the work; therefore—

Resolved, That we recommend that the said W. C. White so arrange his business the coming year as to be at liberty to render the requisite assistance another season.—[Ibid.](#)

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Another action relating to the Ellen G. White writings, the one mentioned in the preceding chapter that called for some revision of wording as the *Testimonies* were to be reprinted in permanent and more convenient form, was taken. The 1883 session would be remembered for this if for nothing else.

Still another far-reaching action relating to Ellen White's ministry read:

Voted, That this conference request that Sister White's talks at the early-morning meetings, and such other matter as may be considered advisable, be published.

This culminated in the publication of twelve articles in the *Review and Herald* in 1884 and in *Gospel Workers*, published in 1892.

An action fulfilling the suggestion made by Butler in his opening address called for the preparation of books to be issued on the subject of spiritual gifts; the General Conference Committee was asked to give attention to this.

It was at one of the meetings at this session that Ellen White gave the message recorded in [Selected Messages 1:45 and 46](#), concerning the reception of her testimonies.

In giving his final report on the conference, Uriah Smith wrote:

We have had good and blessed conferences in the past. We have nothing to abate from the report of any previous meeting. Yet some who have known the best of all former occasions of this kind pronounced this better than any of them. Sister White was greatly strengthened and blessed throughout the meeting. We mention as a matter of interest to the reader, as it was to all present at the closing morning meeting, Tuesday, November 20, her statement then made, that this had been the best meeting that she had ever enjoyed. We do not know that anyone left with other than feelings of courage and good cheer.—[The Review and Herald, November 27, 1883](#).

[239] Smith seemed to bubble over with joy and courage; he mentioned the outlook as more hopeful than ever before, the work on a firmer basis, obstacles lessening, and the prospect of success never more flattering. This feeling seemed to be sensed by everyone at the conference. Haskell telegraphed the Pacific Press that it was “the largest

and best conference ever held” ([The Signs of the Times, November 29, 1883](#)). Ellen White, writing to a friend in Oakland, exclaimed, “This is the best conference ever held among our people.”—[Letter 15a, 1883](#).

Back to California

For Ellen White there was a ten-day Bible reading institute at South Lancaster, Massachusetts, following the General Conference. Then she spent a few days in Pennsylvania and attended a meeting at Wellsville, New York.

So many were making the trip from Battle Creek to Oakland that a railroad car was chartered for the journey. Forty-six were in the traveling party that reached Oakland Monday morning, December 24.

[240] **Chapter 20—(1884) Completing the Work on The
Great Controversy**

At the close of my long journey east,” wrote Ellen White in early January, 1884, “I reached my home in time to spend New Year’s Eve in Healdsburg.”—[The Review and Herald, January 29, 1884](#). The College Hall had been fitted up for a Sabbath school reunion. She described the scene:

Cypress wreaths, autumn leaves, evergreens, and flowers were tastefully arranged; and a large bell of evergreens hung from the arched doorway at the entrance to the room. The tree was well loaded with donations, which were to be used for the benefit of the poor, and to help purchase a bell. Except in a few instances, the names of the donors were not given; but appropriate Bible texts and mottoes were read as the gifts were taken down from the tree. On this occasion nothing was said or done that need burden the conscience of anyone.—[Ibid.](#)

She commented further:

Some have said to me, “Sister White, what do you think of this? Is it in accordance with our faith?” I answer them, “It is with *my* faith.”

In Healdsburg, San Francisco, and Oakland, there are many things to attract our children; large sums are expended every year on Christmas and New Year’s in purchasing gifts for friends. These gifts are not generally satisfactory, for many receive presents that they do not need, when they would be glad to have some other article; some receive the same article from several different persons; and others receive nothing at all.

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We have tried earnestly to make the holidays as interesting as possible to the youth and children, while changing this order of things. Our object has been to keep them away from scenes of amusement among unbelievers. Instead of following a selfish custom, and giving to those from whom presents will be expected in return, let us make our offerings to the Lord. This plan has proved successful in many of our churches, and it was a success on this occasion.—[Ibid.](#)

Driving the lesson home, she admonished: “While we restrain our children from worldly pleasures, that have a tendency to corrupt and mislead, we ought to provide them innocent recreation, to lead them in pleasant paths where there is no danger.”—[Ibid.](#)

In the *Signs* report it is stated: “A tree was standing on the rostrum, from which were taken parcels containing the sum of \$200. This was afterward increased to \$350.”—January 24, 1884.

Work Pursued on the Great Controversy

For five months work on the manuscript for *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 4, *The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan*, had been laid aside. Now back at home one determination motivated her—the completion of the manuscript and the publication of the book. She had made a small beginning five years before, while with her husband in northern Texas. Again and again, as she was able, she picked up the task, only to have to leave it for something that at the moment was more pressing. In mid-March, 1883, she expressed the hope to have the completed manuscript ready in “four weeks” ([Letter 9, 1883](#)). It was still unready when she left for the East in August. Now the new year had come, and she had every expectation of completing the work before she had another serious break in her program. She wrote to Sara McEnterfer on February 14:

I am writing every day. Mean to get my book finished next month, and can scarcely write a letter, I am so intent on this matter.—[Letter 37, 1884.](#)

And intent she was. Five days later, in a letter to Uriah Smith and his wife, Harriet, she disclosed her feelings as she wrote the closing chapters:

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We have, Sister Harriet, everything to be thankful for, that Jesus is our advocate and that He pleads in our behalf. As I write upon my book I feel intensely moved. I want to get it out as soon as possible, for our people need it so much. I shall complete it next month if the Lord gives me health as He has done. I have been unable to sleep nights, thinking of the important things to take place. Three hours' sleep, and sometimes five, is the most I get. My mind is stirred so deeply I cannot rest. Write, write, write, I feel that I must, and not delay.

Great things are before us, and we want to call the people from their indifference, to get ready for that day. Things that are eternal crowd upon my vision day and night. The things that are temporal fade from my sight.—[Letter 11a, 1884](#).

Five weeks later, although most of the manuscript was in the hands of the Pacific Press, she was still hard at work on the finishing touches ([The Signs of the Times, March 27, 1884](#)).

She wrote to Willie in Oakland:

I see by appointments that there are only three weeks left for me to close up my book. Dr. [E. J.] Waggoner [assistant editor of the *Signs*] is fearful I will not get through, but I mean to by that time, if possible....

P.S. Bring me another good fountain pen.—[Letter 44, 1884](#).

Waggoner was more right than she. She had to lay aside her pen and meet three camp meeting appointments in the West, to which she was committed. Then she was back writing again.

On March 23, Joseph Waggoner, editor of *Signs of the Times*, got an advance look at one of the chapters, "Origin of Evil." In a note to the readers of the *Signs* he commented:

We have no fear but that deep interest will be taken in this book, judging from what we have read. We long for its appearing; and so would thousands of our readers if they knew its value. We do not wish to institute comparisons, but we can assure our friends that this volume will not fall below the very best of the writings of Sister White that are already published.—March 27, 1884.

In reporting to readers of the *Review and Herald*, W. C. White [243] explained in a statement published in April:

Most of the chapters are now written, but a few subjects are not yet completed. The work of writing the latter part of this volume has been accomplished slowly and with great difficulty. The scenes and events to be described were of such solemn importance, and the subjects pressed so constantly on the mind of the author, that she has frequently worked beyond her strength.... The manuscript is now so nearly completed that we can speak confidently of the contents of this volume.

He described its leading features:

It begins with the destruction of Jerusalem, and gives brief sketches of the experience of the Christian church to the close of the great controversy between righteousness and sin. Several chapters are especially devoted to an exposure of the great deceptions by which the archrebel has led the world captive, and to a vivid portrayal of his subtlety in introducing these heresies one by one into the church....

For a wide range of subjects and the presentation of facts of general interest, this work surpasses all her former volumes.—[The Review and Herald, April 8, 1884.](#)

White explained that this volume was to be sold by subscription, that is, some appointed person with a prospectus would call on each church member to solicit his order. The plan was to reach

all Adventists in six months. The book would be available in two bindings, one, olive in color, carrying the title *The Great Controversy*, the other in black cloth titled *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 4. The price—\$1 each.

A Visit to the Health Retreat at St. Helena

[244] In January and February, the climate near the northern California coast is often unpleasantly characterized by rain and fog. Ellen White, finding her lungs and throat affected by the damp and cold, decided to spend a few weeks at the Health Retreat a little farther inland on the side of Howell Mountain, near St. Helena, just below the bountiful Crystal Spring. Picking up her writing materials, she drove from Healdsburg with a woman physician, Dr. Chamberlain, the thirty-five miles to the Retreat ([Letter 36, 1884](#)). She found the weather sunny and warm. She would write until she was weary and then she and Dr. Chamberlain would take their canes and climb the mountains.

In writing to Uriah Smith and his wife, Harriet, she described the scenery as “most lovely, exceeding any pictures of loveliness I have ever seen. Brother Smith’s artist eye would take in the scenery and enjoy its beauty, if possible, more than myself.”—[Letter 11a, 1884](#).

Every time she visited the Retreat she became more enamored with the favorable qualities of the location. She found that William Pratt, who had donated the land for the institution and had aided and fostered its development, now was opening the way for Adventist families to come in and settle close to the institution, hoping to develop a small supporting community.

Pratt had given building sites to two families. Now he offered a plot to Ellen White if she would build a home on it. Suitable land close to the institution was in short supply; when he offered her a lot she countered with the proposition that she wished to purchase the available land southeast of the institution. Pratt protested that this would spoil his plan, and she told him that that was precisely what she wanted to do. She stated that she had been shown that the time would come when that land would be needed by the institution and she wished to secure it and hold it for such use.

Reluctantly he sold her eight and a half acres, which she held for a number of years till it was needed for the normal expansion of the plant. With this land, so beautifully located, in her possession, she dreamed of building a modest cottage near the institution. She would make it available to the Retreat when needed. She spent three weeks at the Retreat, during which time she made the initial arrangements for the erection of a home. She was back again in late February. She described the new home in a letter to Mrs. Ings as a “little gem of a house” ([Letter 22a, 1884](#)); she named it “Iliel.” She arranged for planting and fencing a family orchard on that portion of the land that could be cultivated. “Iliel” still serves the institution, overlooking the valley, although in a slightly different location.

Ellen White’s Battle with Appetite

The Health Retreat was founded when vegetarianism among Adventists was in its infancy. Often there were compromises in the homes of believers striving to improve their diets, and also in the two medical institutions operated by the church, at Battle Creek and St. Helena. Dr. John Kellogg had not yet begun manufacturing the health foods that in time were to become helpful. At the time of Ellen White’s three-week visit at the Retreat in January, neither the physician, the manager, nor the cook favored a nonmeat diet. Ellen White describes her experience:

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Meat seldom appears on my table; for weeks at a time I would not taste it, and after my appetite had been trained, I grew stronger, and could do better work.

When I came to the Retreat, I determined not to taste meat, but I could get scarcely anything else to eat, and therefore ate a little meat. It caused unnatural action of the heart. I knew it was not the right kind of food. I wanted to keep house by myself, but this was overruled. If I could have done as I wished, I should have remained at the institution several weeks longer.

The use of meat while at the Retreat awakened the old appetite, and after I returned home, it clamored for indulgence. Then I resolved to change entirely, and not

under any circumstances eat meat, and thus encourage this appetite. Not a morsel of meat or butter has been on my table since I returned. We have milk, fruit, grains, and vegetables.

For a time I lost all desire for food. Like the children of Israel, I hankered after flesh meats. But I firmly refused to have meat bought or cooked. I was weak and trembling, as everyone who subsists on meat will be when deprived of the stimulus. But now my appetite has returned, I enjoy bread and fruit, my head is generally clear, and my strength firmer. I have none of the goneness so common with meat eaters. I have had my lesson, and, I hope, learned it well.—[Letter 2, 1884](#).

[246] She told Smith that she was pleased to read in the *Review* of February 12 an article on diet. “It came in just the right time for me, for I am laboring on this point and needed just what is there published.” The article, written by a Dr. T. R. Allison, of England, and originally published in the *London Times*, recounted the successful experience of a physician who had experimented with a strictly vegetarian diet. It provided documentation Ellen White could use with the manager and the cook at the Retreat. Her messages of counsel to them were firm and kind. The main portions of these testimonies may be found in [Counsels on Diet and Foods, 405-410](#). She called for marked changes in the dietary program at the institution, and a few months later helped to arrange for Mrs. Jenny Ings, who had been assisting her, to serve as matron with the purpose of bringing about changes that would help the institution to operate on “hygienic principles” in properly fulfilling its mission (CDF, p. 406).

The First Camp Meeting in Los Angeles, California

The time had come when through successful evangelistic efforts there were a sufficient number of Seventh-day Adventists south of the Tehachapi Mountains to appoint a truly “southern California” camp meeting. May 8 to 18 was the time selected, and the meeting was to be held in Los Angeles. Most of southern California then was ranch and farming country. To help swell the numbers and bring

courage to the new believers in the south, arrangements were made for a specifically engaged “third-class sleeping car” accommodating thirty-six persons to be attached to the express train operated by the Central and Southern Pacific railroads. It would originate at San Francisco, and Adventists could board it at the principal Central Valley points en route.

Ellen White was urged to attend this, the first camp meeting to be held in the Los Angeles area. Although much worn from her incessant writing, she consented to go. In his report in the *Review and Herald* J. N. Loughborough identified Los Angeles as “near five hundred miles southeast of Oakland, California” ([The Review and Herald, May 27, 1884](#)). He reported a rather sparse attendance of Seventh-day Adventists because the late rains had kept the farmers at home getting in their crops, but the community attendance was gratifying. The sixty- by ninety-six-foot preaching tent and twenty-four family tents were pitched on the grounds, with about sixty people camping. In her letter to her son in Oakland, Ellen White described it in these words: “The attendance of brethren is small; outside attendance is the very best.”—[Letter 47, 1884](#).

On Sunday evening, not only was every seat filled but a hundred of the townspeople stood outside to listen. Ellen White attended one meeting each day, and on some days, two. She was accompanied to the south by Mrs. McOmber, described by Ellen White as “faithful as the day is long, tender, attentive, and at times, as she sees my feebleness, appears in agony because she cannot do more.” She was glad to report:

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This meeting is doing the church great good. They are learning more than they ever knew before.—[Ibid.](#)

Back Again to the Northwest

Ten days after returning to Healdsburg, Ellen White sailed with the company of workers scheduled to attend the two camp meetings in the Northwest. A back-page note in the *Signs* of June 5 gives this word:

The editor of the *Signs* [J. H. Waggoner], in company with Elder W. C. White, Mrs. E. G. White,

Elder J. N. Loughborough, Professor Brownsberger, and Elder William Ings and wife, left San Francisco on the steamer *Oregon*, Friday, May 30, to attend the camp meetings in the Washington Territory and Oregon. They will return about the middle of July.

In conjunction with the Oregon meeting, to be held June 19-30, the “Pacific Coast Council” was to convene. In 1883, S. N. Haskell, president of the California Conference and a member of the General Conference Committee, had advanced the proposition that being so far removed from places where the General Conference sessions were held, many workers and most of the church members were deprived from attending. A council should be held to strengthen the work.

Wrote Haskell:

The importance of taking advance steps [in the cause of God] and wisely laying larger plans for operation is constantly increasing.... There should be frequent consultations in those sections of the country where the work is of a similar character. The wise man says, “In the multitude of counsellors there is safety.” By bringing together different minds, and laying out different plans, and having free counsel with much prayer, we shall secure more light than by a few pressing toward certain points without conferring with others.—[The Review and Herald, March 6, 1884.](#)

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Haskell’s words were carefully chosen. Situations were developing in the church in the Northwest that indicated the need of study, close fellowship, and counseling together. The workers appointed to this council, including Ellen White, were well chosen for the occasion. As their experience and the accomplishments were of particular significance, the account of the few weeks spent there will be reserved for the next chapter.

The sea trip back to San Francisco in early July was pleasant, giving some time for the workers to counsel together. Ellen White felt that in spite of earnest requests, she could not attend the Eastern

camp meetings ([Letter 9, 1884](#)). The type was being set for *The Great Controversy* at the Pacific Press, and there was other writing she felt she must do. She also felt she could not continue to rush from one meeting to the next as fast as the trains could take her. While debating in her own mind what she should do, she wrote to Butler and Haskell on July 10, expressing her mixed feelings and seeking counsel:

I remember I am 56 years old, instead of 25 or 35.... I am not immortal yet, and have cause to remember this every day of my life.... I think my best course is to remain in California.—[Letter 21, 1884](#).

On the other hand, she had a strong desire to attend the Eastern meetings. She wrote of being deeply moved when urgent appeals were made for her to go east, and declared, “I know I have a testimony for God’s people. It burns in my soul day and night, seems as if it would consume me.”—[Ibid.](#) But she reasoned:

I have large work here.... My copyists are here on the ground. It is at great loss to me every day that I leave this coast. Duty does not call in two directions at the same time. Now which is the most urgent?—[Ibid.](#)

Although perplexed, she concluded, “Because you are praying for me, I expect to come.”—[Ibid.](#)

For a few days Ellen White remained at her Healdsburg home, writing for the last chapters of *Great Controversy* and putting on the finishing touches. In late July she went to Oakland to be near the Pacific Press in the final checking on the printing of the book. Then she was off for the Eastern camp meetings, while the final work was done on the printing plates and the book was run through the press.

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Volume 4—The Great Controversy—Finally Ready

A back-page note in [The Review and Herald, October 2, 1884](#), reported that volume 4, “so long looked for, is now out.” It was published simultaneously by both the Pacific Press and the Review and Herald in editions of five thousand copies each. Before the end

of the year, the first printing on the West Coast was sold out. Another milestone in Ellen White's writing was now passed. The book was sold to both Seventh-day Adventists and the general public, and fifty thousand copies were distributed within three years' time.

Just as soon as G. I. Butler had found time to read the new book, he wrote for the *Review and Herald*:

The last volume of this remarkable series is now before the public. We rejoice to welcome its appearance, as we have for years greatly desired to peruse it. We have just had the privilege of reading it through, and take pleasure in giving our impressions of it to the readers of the Review.

It is a high commendation, in view of the excellence of the three preceding volumes of the series, to say that volume 4 equals them. But we can say without hesitation that it far excels them in interest to us. They relate to the past whose history is largely given in the Bible and other books. Much of this relates to the future.—December 2, 1884.

Chapter 21—(1884) Reversing the Tide in the Pacific Northwest

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There were significant reasons for holding the “Pacific Coast Council” in the Pacific Northwest. The reader will recall the concern and burden of heart carried by Ellen White as in the summer of 1880 she closed up her work in Oregon and returned to Oakland, California. She had witnessed the fruitage of lax conference leadership, coupled with the aggressive activities of two young ministers who had not experienced the environment of educational opportunities and association with seasoned ministers. While in Oregon in 1880, she had written rather extensively of the distressing situation and had read these testimonies to the persons involved. At the time the messages had been accepted and the promise made that they would be acted upon, but the counsel and reproof and pledges were soon forgotten. Conditions worsened progressively.

Doctrinal teachings not in accord with those held by the body of believers were stealthily spread. There was a disregard for the authority of the church, and its leaders were treated with disrespect. In time the conference presidents of the two local fields were despised and ignored. A knowledge of this situation in the Northwest confirmed the conviction of church leaders that earnest work must be undertaken to stem the negative and somewhat rebellious tide in Oregon and the Washington territory.

The annual camp meetings for 1884 were to be held in early summer: in the Upper Columbia Conference, at Walla Walla, Washington Territory, June 5-16 ([The Signs of the Times, April 17, 1884](#)); the North Pacific camp meeting would convene a few miles from east Portland, Oregon, June 19-30. the announcement carried the word that the Pacific Coast Council would be held in connection with the Oregon meeting.

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The Walla Walla Meeting

The site selected for the camp meeting in the Washington Territory was a grove of balsams on the bank of Mill Creek, in the city of Walla Walla. Mill Creek is described as a beautiful, swift-running stream. The worker group from California consisted of J. H. Waggoner, editor of the *Signs of the Times*; J. N. Loughborough; W. C. White; Mrs. Ellen G. White; Professor Brownsberger, president of Healdsburg College; and William Ings and his wife. The latter served as a traveling companion of Ellen White. On the campground they were associated with G. W. Colcord, conference president; W. L. Raymond, worker in the field; J. O. Corliss, the newly come evangelist; and C. L. Boyd, president of the neighboring conference.

Waggoner wrote commendably of the physical situation and then introduced matters of deeper concern. It is these that form the basis of this chapter:

The condition of the people at the commencement was not the most fortunate for a profitable time. Points of doctrine subversive of the message had been introduced, and to some extent been received, which had weakened the faith and courage of many. Reports had also been circulated against most of those who are bearing responsibilities in the work, which caused many to distrust the work itself; and by these means a spirit of complaining had been fostered. All this was sufficient to bring darkness into the conference, and to make it somewhat difficult to reach the hearts of the people.—*Ibid.*, July 3, 1884

The Heart of the Problem

At the heart of the problems primarily was William L. Raymond, a man indigenous to the Northwest, a promising young worker who had been ordained to the ministry at the camp meeting attended by Ellen White in 1878. He was genial and seemingly very humble, but he was propagating certain views out of harmony with those generally held by Seventh-day Adventists. He was critical of leadership,

from the General Conference through the local conference administration. Church members had joined with him to such an extent that the president was powerless.

Soon after coming onto the Walla Walla campground, Ellen White, in writing to Haskell, who had been with her in 1880, stated:

The enemy is at work through different ones to block the wheel of progress. Elder Raymond has been doing a bad work in complaining of all the leaders and finding fault with the General Conference in the building of churches and schoolhouses. He is a man that can do much harm because he has good traits of character and is of ready tact as a helper. But the Lord understands it all and He will work for His people that they shall not to be confused or confounded.—[Letter 19a, 1884](#).

After a strong confrontation with discord at the camp meetings, Ellen White's word, as written to Smith, was:

The meeting closed up well in Walla Walla. It was a success, and a great change has taken place in the feelings of the Upper Columbia Conference. Sunday I spoke upon the subject of temperance. If ever the Lord helped me, He did at this time. I was free and free indeed. The Lord let the power of His Spirit rest upon me.—[Letter 7, 1884](#).

While marked victories were gained at the Walla Walla meeting and many sensed the presence of the Lord, there was more to be accomplished if the ground gained was to be securely held. The work continued through the Oregon camp meeting and the Pacific Coast Council, which convened in east Portland beginning June 19, three days later.

Visit to Multnomah Falls

The highlight of the trip by train to Portland was a stop at Multnomah Falls. Ellen White described this in her diary.

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On our way from Walla Walla Tuesday morning the cars stopped, as they generally do, twenty minutes at Multnomah Falls. Nearly all left the cars to climb the high ascent to obtain a clear view of this wondrously beautiful, grand sight. Sister Ings and Willie accompanied me. Elder Waggoner, Raymond, Elder Jones and wife were all climbing the steep ascent. There were steps built in the embankment, then a narrow zigzag path, then more wooden steps. This was repeated many times until we reached and passed on to a rustic bridge which spanned a chasm above the first fall. The grand fall is above this and called the Bridal Veil. The point from which the water flows is about nine hundred feet high. As the water descends it breaks upon the jutting rocks, scattering off in widespread, beautiful sprays. It is a lovely sight.

I would have been pleased could I have spent an entire day in this place surrounded with lovely scenery.... We looked above, then beneath, and were led to exclaim, "How wonderful are all Thy works, Lord God Almighty!" Surely this is the work of the great Master Artist. We feel our littleness, our nothingness, in the presence of such manifestations of the great God. I called to mind the words of the psalmist when he calls upon everything that hath breath to praise the Lord.—
[Manuscript 9, 1884.](#)

The Pacific Coast Council and Camp Meeting at East Portland

Ellen White and those traveling with her from Walla Walla arrived in Portland on Tuesday at noon, June 17. Regarding the situation at the encampment Waggoner declared:

From the first it was evident that the meeting would be one of hard labor. The condition of the people was not favorable; most of the members of the principal churches had taken quite a decided stand against the action of the General Conference, which made it very

difficult to reach them. Our working force was found to be none too strong for the occasion; and had it not been for the pointed testimonies of Sister White, we have every reason to fear the meeting would not have accomplished the object desired.—[Ibid.](#)

Writing to Smith, Ellen White noted:

The work in this conference was of the same character as the work above [at Walla Walla], only more so. We have had one of the hardest battles we ever had to engage in. The leading men in this conference seem to have no respect for the General Conference. The people have no respect for ministers or president.... We cannot give you all particulars. We had men hard to deal with, difficult to be impressed. The labors of our ministers were accounted of no more value than their own wisdom and judgment. *The only thing they did not dare to reject was the testimonies. To these they did bow after long delay.*—[Letter 20, 1884.](#) (Italics supplied.)

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Raymond was at this camp meeting and the Pacific Coast Council. At the Walla Walla meeting he had made confessions and had attempted to draw near to his brethren, but cherished views are not easy to part with. There was another confrontation in east Portland. Wrote Ellen White in her letter to Smith:

Brother Raymond has done a work that was tearing down. New views after the order of the views of Brother Owen were presented to the council for examination. The same was done with Brother Raymond's views. A council heard his arguments and then wrote out their answer. He has consented to abide by the decision of his brethren.—[Letter 20, 1884.](#)

Shortly after the meeting Ellen White wrote her testimony dealing with the Raymond matter. It may be found in *Testimonies*, volume 5, where he is referred to as "Brother D." She indicated the procedure that should be followed under such circumstances:

There are a thousand temptations in disguise prepared for those who have the light of truth; and the only safety for any of us is in receiving no new doctrine, no new interpretation of the Scriptures, without first submitting it to brethren of experience. Lay it before them in a humble, teachable spirit, with earnest prayer; and if they see no light in it, yield to their judgment; for “in the multitude of counselors there is safety.”—[Testimonies for the Church, 5:293](#).

This counsel was not new from the pen of Ellen White. Her first book, *A Sketch of the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White*, published in August, 1851, sounded the note:

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I saw that the shepherds should consult those in whom they have reason to have confidence, those who have been in all the messages, and are firm in all the present truth, before they advocate new points of importance, which they may think the Bible sustains.—[Early Writings, 61](#).

Again in November, 1851, Ellen White reported that while she was traveling in Vermont, the importance of laying new views before leading brethren, or “messengers,” as they were designated, was again opened to her in vision. Here is her account as it related to the meeting held on Sunday, November 9, 1851.

I ...also told them ...that the messengers of God should be perfectly united in their views of Bible truth and should consult with each other, and should not advance any new view until they first went to the messengers and examined those views with the Bible, and if they were correct, let all the messengers spread them, and if they were error, lay them to one side. Then the gospel seed would be sown in union and raised in strength; and all the messengers east and west, north and south, would be telling the same story.—[Letter 8, 1851](#).

Brethren of Experience at the Pacific Coast Council

At this point it may be well to look at “the brethren of experience” at the Portland meeting:

Joseph H. Waggoner, the senior minister, 64 years of age, a Sabbathkeeping Adventist since 1851. He was joint editor and publisher of a political newspaper in Wisconsin when he joined the church. In 1884 he was editor of the *Signs of the Times*.

John N. Loughborough, pioneer minister, 52 years of age. He was a first-day Adventist lay preacher when he accepted the message in 1852. As an evangelist, in 1868 he pioneered the work of the church in California.

William C. White, 30 years old, son of James and Ellen White. He started his career as manager of the Pacific Press and served in many positions in important interests of the church. In 1884 he was a member of the General Conference Committee.

Sidney Brownsberger, 39 years old, first principal of Battle Creek College. In 1884 he was principal of Healdsburg College.

William Ings, minister and publishing house worker. In 1877 he had been sent to Switzerland to assist J. N. Andrews.

Ellen G. White, age 56, the messenger of the Lord.

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John O. Corliss, age 39. He became a Seventh-day Adventist in 1868; he was associated with James White for a time, and was tutored by Joseph Bates.

These were undoubtedly joined by G. W. Colcord and C. L. Boyd, presidents of the local conferences.

It was this group that heard William Raymond present his views and gave a written report of their findings. This experience in the Northwest set the pace in dealing with questions relating to so-called “new light.”

E. G. White Vision at East Portland

It is clear that matters relating to the Raymond case were opened up to Ellen White while she was at the meeting of the Pacific Coast Council. At several points in her nine-page testimony concerning Raymond and the handling of “new light,” Ellen White makes such statements as “Brother D [Raymond] was presented before me.”—

[Testimonies for the Church, 5:289](#). “God has presented this matter before me in its true light. Brother D’s heart is not right.”—[Ibid., 5:290](#). Loughborough, in giving an address at the General Conference session nine years later, stated:

I have seen Sister White in vision about fifty times. The first time was about forty years ago.... Her last open vision was in 1884, on the campground at Portland, Oregon.—[The General Conference Bulletin, 1893, 19, 20](#).

In her testimony article written in 1884, which opens on page 289 of volume 5 of the *Testimonies*, Ellen White touched many points and sounded several warnings. We make reference to a few:

By his freedom in gathering up and repeating false reports, he [Brother D] has come in between the people and the message which God has given His ministers to bear to them to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord. His good traits have made him all the more dangerous; for they have given him influence.—Page 289.

[257] While he is laboring under its the [conference’s] sanction, his brethren have a right to suppose that his views are correct. And with this sanction his influence has been a power for evil.—Page 290.

Suppose that Brother D leads the people to question and reject the testimonies that God has been giving to His people during the past thirty-eight years; suppose he makes them believe that the leaders in this work are designing, dishonest men, engaged in deceiving the people; what great and good work has he done? It is a work exactly similar to that of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; and with all whom he has influenced the result will be disastrous.—Page 290.

God has not passed His people by and chosen one solitary man here and another there as the only ones worthy to be entrusted with His truth. He does not give one man new light contrary to the established faith of

the body. In every reform men have arisen making this claim.—Page 291.

That which Brother D calls light is apparently harmless; it does not look as though anyone could be injured by it. But, brethren, it is Satan's device, his entering wedge. This has been tried again and again. One accepts some new and original idea which does not seem to conflict with the truth. He talks of it and dwells upon it until it seems to him to be clothed with beauty and importance, for Satan has power to give this false appearance. At last it becomes the all-absorbing theme, the one great point around which everything centers; and the truth is uprooted from the heart.

No sooner are erratic ideas started in his mind than Brother D begins to lose faith and to question the work of the Spirit which has been manifested among us for so many years.... Brethren, as an ambassador of Christ I warn you to beware of these side issues, whose tendency is to divert the mind from the truth. Error is never harmless. It never sanctifies, but always brings confusion and dissension. It is always dangerous.—Page 292.

Waggoner stated in his report:

Though it seemed harder to approach the people here than in the meeting at Walla Walla, there was a more thorough work done at the East Portland meeting than at the other. Almost all broke down and made an entire surrender of their prejudices and opposition to the action of the General Conference. Hearty confessions were made, and strong pledges to stand by whosoever should be sent to help them. Elder Boyd was very cheerfully reelected president, and we believe he has consecrated associates in his fellow officers.—[The Signs of the Times, July 17, 1884.](#)

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The way was now open for the meetings to climax in a strong, devotional atmosphere. Monday, the last day of the council, twenty-five were baptized in the Willamette River, close to the campground.

Raymond and Jones, both of whom needed broader experience, were assigned to work in other States. Within a few years Raymond was lost sight of, but Jones worked up to the position of associate editor of the *Signs of the Times*, to be followed by other positions of trust.

Loughborough was elected president of the Upper Columbia Conference, with the understanding he would divide his time between that field and other areas where he was needed.

The cause of God was greatly hurt by what had taken place in the Northwest over a period of several years. Waggoner made this observation:

In the work of establishing this truth it was far different. Those whom God evidently set forth to develop this faith labored for unity, not distraction. They carefully and prayerfully examined the points, and when they had constructed their argument, they submitted it to the judgment of their brethren, and only taught and published it after it was approved. And if by any means a point was put forth upon which there was not agreement, its projectors carefully abstained from further teaching it.

And God blessed this method, and His Spirit approved their work. But men have always come up who gave no evidence that the Lord had set them forth to bring out the faith, who seize upon some point, either untrue or unimportant if true, and without consulting their brethren of experience, thrust it before the weak and inexperienced as new truth which is calculated to greatly strengthen the message!

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But wherever such a work is found, confusion and distrust are sure to follow.—*Ibid.*

Ellen White Warns of Subtle Deceptions

In her letter to Smith, Ellen White wrote of what is before the church:

From that which the Lord has been pleased to show me there will arise just such ones all along and many

more of them claiming to have new light, which is a side issue, an entering wedge. The widening will increase until there is a breach made between those who accept these views and those who believe the third angel's message. Just as soon as these new ideas are accepted, then there will be drawing away from those whom God has used in the work, for the minds begin to doubt and withdraw from the leaders because God has laid them aside and chosen more humble men to do His work. This is the only interpretation they can give to this matter, as the leaders do not see this important light.—[Letter 20, 1884](#).

In her testimony dealing with the Raymond matter, Ellen White sounded a solemn, startling warning:

The enemy is preparing for his last campaign against the church. He has so concealed himself from view that many can hardly believe that he exists, much less can they be convinced of his amazing activity and power. They have to a great extent forgotten his past record; and when he makes another advance move, they will not recognize him as their enemy, that old serpent, but they will consider him a friend, one who is doing a good work....

Satan hopes to involve the remnant people of God in the general ruin that is coming upon the earth. As the coming of Christ draws nigh, he will be more determined and decisive in his efforts to overthrow them. Men and women will arise professing to have some new light or some new revelation whose tendency is to unsettle faith in the old landmarks. Their doctrines will not bear the test of God's word, yet souls will be deceived.—[Testimonies for the Church, 5:294, 295](#).

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Chapter 22—(1884) The Eastern Camp Meetings and D. M. Canright

Not until her work on *The Great Controversy* was past the point that her attention might be needed did Ellen White consent to even consider the invitations for her to attend the later Eastern camp meetings. Many hearts rejoiced when they read on the back page of the July 22, 1884, *Review*:

Good News for the Eastern Camp Meetings.

Sunday morning, the twentieth, we received the gratifying intelligence by telegram that Sister White will attend the Eastern camp meetings, beginning with New York, August 14.

With Mrs. McOmber as a traveling companion, Ellen White set out in early August for the East. She spent a few days at the Iowa camp meeting, followed by meetings in New York, Massachusetts, and Vermont. On Tuesday, September 9, she arrived in Portland, Maine, for the camp meeting in her old home city.

Back Home in Portland, Maine

Tuesday evening, September 9, Ellen White, accompanied by Mrs. McOmber, was in Portland for the Maine camp meeting already in progress. Wednesday, they drove twelve miles to Gorham to visit Ellen's sister, an invalid who had suffered from rheumatism for six years. Her sister was not well, but there was nothing Ellen could do but have prayer with her and leave her in God's hands. Afterward she visited some old landmarks.

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I visited localities of special interest in connection with my early life, among them the spot where I met with the accident that has made me a lifelong invalid....

I passed the spot where the house once stood where Jesus revealed himself to me in power, and I seemed to see His blessed face beaming upon me in divine love and gentleness.

I also visited my early home, and the house where my first vision was given me; but railroad buildings have crowded out many dwellings that used to stand in this locality. In the chamber of the last-mentioned house, I once passed a night of anguish at the thought that I must go out and relate to others the things that God had presented before me....

I felt the deepest interest in the meeting in Portland, where my childhood and youth were passed. Some of my old schoolmates made themselves known to me on the ground. I also met a number of relatives who were my neighbors forty years ago. It afforded me great pleasure to meet and greet these old friends.—[The Review and Herald, November 25, 1884.](#)

On Wednesday evening, September 10, she addressed the audience, and tells of her feelings:

The Lord gave me strength to bear my testimony. What emotions filled my heart as I stood before the people of my native city! It was here that I received my first impressions in regard to the speedy, personal coming of our Lord. Here my father's family, including myself, were excluded from the Methodist Church for cherishing this blessed hope. I knew there were none in the congregation who had been active workers in the message of the first and second angels. And yet this city was favored with special light and privileges in the great movement of 1842-1844. A large company accepted the faith, and rejoiced in the glad tidings that Jesus was soon coming.—[Ibid.](#)

In a letter to Mrs. Ings she wrote of the good attendance and of how "cousins and acquaintances came to the meeting."—[Letter 27, 1884.](#)

[262] Uriah Smith was on the grounds, and she shared with him some of the page proofs, just received, for *The Great Controversy*. He was deeply moved in reading the chapter on “The Time of Trouble” and felt every sentence of it was needed. She too was thrilled in rereading it. Bearing in mind the problems Smith had faced a year before, in his relationship to the manifestation of the Spirit of Prophecy, she wrote: “We are so glad that Elder Smith is with us again. Elder Haskell says he preaches as he never has done before.”—[Letter 59, 1884](#).

A Time of Spiritual Triumph

What a change from the general situation in 1883! Battle Creek College having made a change in direction in its thrust and program, was now prospering. An ever-increasing number of young men and women were enrolled there, preparing to enter the work of the church. The college president, W. H. Littlejohn, kept the triumphs of the college before the nationwide church through his cheering reports in the *Review*. In addition, from time to time he submitted articles on spiritual and doctrinal lines.

The Battle Creek church, having made a turn around in attitude toward the college and toward the Spirit of Prophecy, was now exerting a strong, positive influence. Frequent reports from Healdsburg College and South Lancaster Academy indicated that these other schools of the church were making a positive contribution. Reports also were being received concerning several prominent members of outlying churches who were moving from darkness into the light.

It was evident that the Spirit of God was at work, and the reception of the messages that the Holy Spirit indited Ellen White to give was raising the church to new heights of spiritual fervor. In writing to children William and Mary on the West Coast, she told of the reaction of the president of the General Conference: “Elder Butler says the fruits of last year’s work, the testimony I bore, can never be fully estimated and the result known until eternity.”—[Letter 60, 1884](#).

The Michigan Camp Meeting

Ellen White attended three more camp meetings, Ohio, Michigan, and Nebraska, but it was the Michigan meeting held at Jackson, some forty miles due east of Battle Creek, that was most notable in 1884. The attendance was much larger than anticipated. Wrote Smith in his editorial report:

The sight of the large tent 80 by 120 feet almost completely filled with Sabbathkeepers, even at the early-morning meetings, was one to inspire the dullest heart. The ground might appropriately be called a city of tents, for there were nearly two hundred cotton dwellings and pavilions, regularly laid out with appropriate streets and passageways, and some eighteen hundred of our people permanently located in the tents or in dwellings near the ground. This was a larger number of Sabbathkeepers, perhaps by 50 percent, than was ever before assembled at a camp meeting during the history of our cause.—[The Review and Herald, October 7, 1884.](#)

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Encouraged by the good attendance and the response of the citizens of Jackson, who showed a deep interest, the conference voted to purchase a larger tent, 100 by 150 feet, for the next camp meeting. On Friday, September 26, an excursion train brought 240 college students and Sanitarium employees from Battle Creek, some fifty miles to the West.

It was impressive to observe the fruitage of Ellen White's labors as on several occasions anywhere from two hundred to 350 people responded to her appeals and went forward for prayers. "There was deep feeling," wrote Smith, "and though no excitement or fanaticism, the manifest movings of the Spirit of God upon the heart." He looked forward to the permanent fruitage of the spiritual messages.

What seemed to be a climax to the Jackson camp meeting came at the early-morning service on Sabbath, September 27, when the whole camp was electrified by the remarks made by the backslidden D. M. Canright.

D. M. Canright's Experience

[264] Dudley M. Canright, a native of Michigan, was well known to a large part of those on the campground. At the age of 21 he felt called to the ministry and went to Battle Creek to confer with James White. After an hour's visit White gave him a pair of charts and a Bible and said to him, "Here, Dudley, take these, and go out and try it. When you become satisfied that you have made a mistake, bring them back." A year later Canright reported to White, "You have lost them."—*Ibid.*, May 20, 1873; Carrie Johnson, *I Was Canright's Secretary*, p. 14. [Note: *I was Canright's secretary*, by Carrie Johnson, tells in well-documented form the story of his life, his backslidings, his final apostasy, and her experience as a youthful secretary working for him over a period of several months. He was then writing his antagonistic book *The life of Mrs. E. G. White* (1919). Her book is the best over-all source for much information on Canright and is well worth reading.] He threw himself wholeheartedly into his work. At times doubt and discouragements entered his mind, but, pressing on, he became not only a successful evangelist but an outstanding debater as well. In the Iowa Conference, presided over by G. I. Butler in 1869, Canright debated with a Presbyterian minister. But immediately afterward he fell into discouragement. Through Butler's diligent personal labors, running through the entire night, Canright regained his confidence and courage (*Ibid.*, 25).

During the next fifteen years, although elevated to responsible positions, in which he served well, he experienced several such periods of depression. Each time, however, with the encouragement of Butler, he regained his confidence and continued a fruitful ministry. In 1882 he gave up preaching once again and took up farming in Otsego, Michigan. From there, on December 8, 1883, he wrote to Uriah Smith, expressing his high regard for Butler and all the leading men: "I have no feelings against any of them, excepting Mrs. White. I dislike her very much indeed.... If I were situated differently, I would just as soon join some other church." - *Ibid.*, 65.

In response to the pleading of his friends, Canright attended the camp meeting at Jackson, Michigan, in September, 1884, the meeting reported in this chapter. There he again had a conference with Butler, and after prayer and counsel, receiving an explanation

of some matters he had viewed in an exaggerated light, he reversed his position and took his stand with Seventh-day Adventists.

A thousand people that early Sabbath morning meeting, many with tears in their eyes, heard his heartfelt confession. He spoke of the clouds of darkness that had enveloped his mind. But now, he declared, all was clear to him. He confessed freely that for years he had harbored in his heart bitter feelings toward Mrs. White because of the testimonies he had received from her. [See [Testimonies for the Church, 3:304-329](#) (1873); [Selected Messages 2:162-170](#) (1880). See also [Testimonies for the Church, 5:516-520](#) (1886); [The Signs of the Times, 571-573](#) (1887); [Ibid., 621-628](#) (1887).]

Later in the company of a select few, he made a more specific confession to her and begged her for forgiveness. [265]

Canright seemed like a changed man. He went into the gospel field once more to minister. Writing of his experience for the readers of the *Review and Herald*, he stated that his problem went back eleven years to the time he and Lucretia, in Colorado, had received a testimony from Mrs. White that they had thought too severe. He referred to other messages from Ellen White. His explanation of the reasons for his course of action is worthy of notice:

I think that my disbelief of the testimonies and other truths has come by opening my heart to doubts, cherishing them and magnifying them.... Like Peter, I did not know myself till God left me to be tried. I feel greatly humbled under the shameful failure I have made....

Friday, September 26, while on the campground at Jackson, Michigan, I felt in my heart the most remarkable change that I ever experienced in all my life. It was a complete reversion of all my feelings. Light and faith came into my soul, and I felt that God had given me another heart.

I never felt such a change before, not even when first converted, nor when I embraced the message, nor at any other time.... I want to say to all my friends everywhere that now I not only accept but believe the testimonies to be from God. Knowing the opposition I have felt to

them, this change in my feelings is more amazing to myself that it can be to others.

I am fully satisfied that my own salvation and my usefulness in saving others depends upon my being connected with this people and this work. And here I take my stand to risk all I am, or have, or hope for, in this life and the life to come, with this people and this work.—[The Review and Herald, October 7, 1884.](#)

The Otsego Meeting

At the General Conference session held in November, announcement was made that general meetings would be held in Otsego, Michigan, to begin the next Friday evening and run through Monday. Ellen White, with a number of workers from Battle Creek, attended. [266] Canright presided in Otsego, and she was entertained in the Canright home. In her report of the meetings she stated:

The brethren and sisters had come together from different churches, and the house of worship was crowded. The gallery was full, seats were placed in the aisles, and quite a number could obtain no seats. My own soul was strengthened and refreshed in dwelling upon the gracious promises of God. In watering others, my own soul was watered.—[Ibid., December 2, 1884.](#)

As the meetings progressed, all eyes were on Canright. She continued in her report, “How my heart rejoiced to see Brother Canright all interest, heart and soul in the work, as he used to be years in the past! I could but exclaim, ‘What hath the Lord wrought!’”—[Ibid.](#) In the evening after the Sabbath he gave an impressive discourse, but it was on Sunday morning, when he recounted his past experience, that the people gave their most earnest attention. He declared:

It seems to me.... that my whole soul is now bound up in this present truth. I have told my brethren that if the world were before me, the truth is so clear that I know I could make them see it....

I want to say that I have been changed right around in my feelings and convictions. I do not say I am fully satisfied in everything; but I believe the truth as I used to believe it....

In the twenty-five years I have been with our people, I have traveled from Maine to California, and I have never known one man who has drawn back and begun to harbor doubts who did not begin to separate from God. I have never known one who through such a course has become more spiritual or more anxious to do something to save his fellow men....

When I left off preaching, I vowed to myself and to my God that I would go right along laboring as I had done, be faithful in the church, and do my duty every time. Well, brethren, after I had gone that way for a time, I found that I had lost my hold upon God. I lost my spirituality. Now there must be something wrong about such a course; for if it is right it seems to me that a man would certainly prosper in that way.—*Ibid.*

Bringing his confession and his declaration to a close, Canright [267] made a statement that those in the church at Otsego and those who read the report of his address in the *Review* would not soon forget. Unfortunately, however, within three years he himself had forgotten it:

Brethren, I will say this: So far as I am concerned, I will start right here; and all that I have, all that I am, I will put into this work, and take my risk of everything. I will never do this backing up anymore; and I believe that if I ever go back from this I am lost. All I have I will give to this cause. I believe there is in this truth that which will save men. I have seen drunkards saved by it, and the wickedest of men saved by it; and may God help us to triumph with it when Jesus comes.—*Ibid.*

The same issue of the *Review and Herald* that carried the Canright statement also carried Ellen White's report of the three-day

meeting in Otsego. Near its close she not only made reference to his restoration to the faith and the cause but also spoke warmly of her entertainment in the Canright home. She was ecstatic in her description of what had taken place:

I could but make melody to God in my heart every moment as I considered the work that had been wrought so wonderfully in this case. Elder Canright saved to the cause! His precious family led into the ways of truth and righteousness! I said in my heart, as I looked upon them, Saved, saved from ruin! If there is joy in the presence of the angels in heaven, why should there not be joy in our hearts? I do rejoice, I do praise the Lord, that mine eyes have seen his salvation.—*Ibid.*

The 1884 General Conference Session

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Between the Michigan camp meeting held at Jackson and the rather memorable three-day meeting held at Otsego, a three-week-long (October 30-November 20) General Conference session was held in the Tabernacle in Battle Creek. It was a meeting of earnest activity in facing the challenges of a rapidly expanding work. Each day throughout the three weeks featured an early-morning devotional service and evening preaching. Mornings and afternoons were devoted to business. Needy fields were studied, and workers moved to fill the needs. It was a very busy session.

On the opening day the newly organized Swiss Conference was received into the General Conference, and early in the session a memorial was presented by the Central European Mission. In this the General Conference was petitioned to proceed with the development of the publishing work in Europe, including the completion of the publishing house under construction in Basel, Switzerland. It urged that W. C. White be sent to Europe “at as early a date as possible, to take charge of the finishing and furnishing of this publishing house.” Also:

We express our earnest desire that Sister White may visit Europe, that the cause here may share the benefits

of her labors and of the precious light and instruction which the Lord so graciously grants us through His servant.—[Ibid., November 11, 1884](#)

Both Ellen and W. C. White responded to the invitation for them to visit Europe by stating that “they stood ready to go whenever God should indicate by unmistakable providences that such was their duty.”—[Ibid.](#)

Later in the session action was taken:

That Elder W. C. White go to Europe to assist in the purchase of machinery for our [publishing] houses in Bale, Switzerland, and Christiania [Oslo], Norway, and in the placing of the publishing work there on the proper basis, and in counseling and assisting in all branches of the work in Europe.—[Ibid., November 18, 1884](#)

No formal action regarding Ellen White was taken at the session, but Butler, in reporting on plans for W. C. White, mentioned:

We may say in this connection that it is earnestly hoped by all the delegates at the conference that Sister White would conclude to make this trip with him, and thus greatly help and strengthen the work in the Old World. This we know would be, at her age, and with her infirmities, a step which would seem like a great sacrifice; but God could strengthen her for it.—[Ibid., November 25, 1884](#)

The needs of Australia also were studied in plans for the outreach of the work of the church. In January, 1875, Ellen White had been shown a publishing house there. Several times during the session there was talk of S. N. Haskell pioneering the work in this southern continent. Finally the following actions were taken: [269]

That, in view of the great importance of spreading the truth to earth’s remotest bounds, and of opening a mission in Australia as soon as possible, Elder S. N. Haskell go to Australia next May, taking with him

a competent corps of laborers to establish a mission, and that he return in time to attend the next General Conference.—[Ibid., November 18, 1884](#)

Ellen White took a number of the early (5:30 A.M.) ministers' meetings. Dr. J. H. Kellogg came in and presented a good series of lectures on health, well supported, of course, by Ellen White. Among the resolutions passed at the session was this:

Whereas, We have received light from the Testimony of the Spirit that the health reform is a part of the present truth, and it having suffered neglect, both from our ministers and people; therefore—

Resolved, That we urge upon all our people, both ministers and churches, the duty and necessity of renewing their interest in this important subject; and we further request that articles on this subject be again published in our church paper.—[Ibid.](#)

On the last day of the session the following action was taken relating to the newly published *Great Controversy*:

Resolved, That we hail with great pleasure the publication of volume 4, *The Great Controversy*; that, while we anxiously looked for it, expecting that it would give important information concerning the closing scenes of this world's history, we can freely say that it more than meets our most sanguine expectations; and that we earnestly urge all our people to read it carefully and prayerfully, and to use all proper means to place it before the world.—[Ibid., November 25, 1884](#)

Butler closed his survey of the accomplishments of the session in these encouraging words:

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Our conference, though full of labor and great perplexity, was a pleasant one. The instruction given by Sister White was excellent, and such a spirit of love and union prevailed in our midst as has seldom been

seen before. Some whom we feared were lost to the cause have returned to help us in bearing the burdens of the work. Our delegates go home with courage and hope.—[Ibid.](#)

The Trip Home to California

The conference session closed on Thursday, November 20. W. C. White, reelected to the five-member General Conference Committee, had matters to attend to before starting west. This delayed the departure for Oakland of the chartered passenger cars until Monday, December 4. This gave Ellen White a couple more weeks in Battle Creek. She was invited to give the Thanksgiving address in the Tabernacle on Thursday, November 27.

Friday she went to Chicago, taking weekend services there. On Monday, December 8, she joined the group in the two westbound chartered cars as they passed through the city. She reached her Healdsburg home in mid-December and was joyfully received by her family of helpers ([Letter 62, 1884](#)).

Looking back over the year, Ellen White and her literary assistants could count fifty E. G. White articles published in the forty-eight issues of the *Signs* for 1884, and fifty-two in the fifty-one issues of the *Review and Herald*. And of course, the 549-page volume 4 of *The Spirit of Prophecy*, entitled *The Great Controversy*.

Her work for the coming year was outlined in the letter she wrote to her brother-in-law John White, in Kansas:

The decision of the conference is passed, that WCW, accompanied by his wife, shall accompany his mother to Europe.... I could not prevent this decision, but I told the conference I could not consent to go unless the writings that are now unfinished could be completed this winter.—[Letter 61, 1884](#).

Chapter 23—(1885) Invitation to Visit Europe

In behalf of our mission” read the memorial presented by the Committee of the Central European Mission to the 1884 General Conference session. “In behalf of our brethren and sisters generally, whose wishes we know, and on our own behalf personally, we express our earnest desire that Sister White may visit Europe.” The reasons for this earnest invitation were stated: “That the cause here may share the benefits of her labors and of the precious light and instruction which the Lord so graciously grants us through His servant.”—[The Review and Herald, November 11, 1884.](#)

George I. Butler, General Conference president, had only a few months earlier been in Europe. Under his encouragement plans had been launched to establish a publishing house at Basel, Switzerland, and the construction of a four-story stone building was under way. In late May he had attended the Second European Missionary Council. He reported in the *Review and Herald* of June 24, the rather comprehensive action taken by that council:

Whereas, Experience has taught us that the personal labors of our dear Sister White are invaluable to the cause in accomplishing what her writings alone cannot accomplish; and—

Whereas, Our European brethren feel the greater need of these for having never been favored with them, and have a strong desire to see and hear Sister White; therefore—

Resolved, That we extend to Sister White a hearty and urgent invitation to visit the different fields in Europe as soon as practicable.

Whereas, The publishing work in Europe has in its growth reached a point where it calls for the labors of those of special experience in the work of printing; therefore—

Resolved, that it is the sense of this meeting that Brother W. C. White should soon come to Europe to render the assistance in the publishing work that his experience qualifies him to bestow.

With this matter placed before the readers of the *Review* in the early summer, it was no surprise to Ellen White and her son when the memorial was read at the General Conference session and the respective actions taken. This had a strong influence on Ellen White's plans and work.

Back in California, she soon found that she was without the strength she had expected to enjoy. She spoke in the Oakland church Sabbath morning, January 3, 1885, but was soon aware that she must take steps to recoup her physical forces. The finishing touches were being put on her little home, Iliel, near the Health Retreat at St. Helena, and she divided her time for a few weeks between St. Helena and her headquarters at Healdsburg.

Oh, To Know What To Do!

Ellen White did not relish traveling to Europe, especially in time to attend the missionary council in September. "To travel across the continent in the heat of summer and in my condition of health," she wrote, "seemed almost presumptuous."—[Ibid., September 15, 1885](#). How she wished for positive guidance to know what course to follow:

As the appointed time for starting drew near, my faith was severely tested. I so much desired someone of experience upon whom I could rely for counsel and encouragement. My courage was gone, and I longed for human help, one who had a firm hold from above, and whose faith would stimulate mine. By day and by night my prayers ascended to heaven that I might know the will of God, and have perfect submission to it. Still my way was not made clear; I had no special evidence that I was in the path of duty, or that my prayers had been heard.—[Ibid.](#)

[289] As the time for final decision was at hand, W. C. White slipped away from Oakland and spent a few days at Healdsburg. He spoke courage to his mother. He bade her look to the past, when, under the most forbidding circumstances, she had moved out by faith according to the best light she had, and the Lord strengthened and supported her. Of the experience she reported:

I did so, and decided to act on the judgment of the General Conference, and start on the journey, trusting in God. My trunk was packed, and I returned with him to Oakland. Here I was invited to speak to the church Sabbath afternoon. I hesitated; but these words came to me with power, "My grace is sufficient for you." The struggle was hard, but I consented. I then felt that I must seek God most earnestly. I knew that He was able to deliver in a manner that I could not discern.

In [my] thus trusting, my fears were removed, but not my weakness. I rode to the church and entered the desk, believing that the Lord would help. While speaking, I felt that the everlasting arms were about me, imparting physical strength and mental clearness to speak the word with power. The love and blessing of God filled my heart, and from that hour I began to gather strength and courage.—*Ibid.*

Writing of the experience in her diary, she said, "I was no longer uncertain. I would venture to go with the party across the plains."—*Manuscript 16a, 1885*. There were twelve who left Oakland for the East on Monday, July 13. Among them, of course, were her son Willie, his wife, Mary, and their daughter, Ella. There was also Miss Sara McEnterfer, whom Ellen chose to go with her as a traveling companion not only across the country but also to Europe.

The Assurance Finally Came

Then something, to her quite remarkable, took place:

Although I had prayed for months that the Lord would make my path so plain that I would know that I

was making no mistake, still I was obliged to say that God hangs a mist before my eyes. But when I had taken my seat on the cars, the assurance came that I was moving in accordance with the will of God.... The sweet peace that God alone can give was imparted to me, and like a wearied child, I found rest in Jesus.—[Ibid.](#), [September 15, 1885](#).

This was her twenty-fifth trip to or from the West Coast. On Monday, July 20, they reached Battle Creek and were met by Edson and taken to his home for lunch. Tuesday was very warm, but she rode out to Oak Hill Cemetery, took a treatment at the Sanitarium, and visited the Review and Herald office. In the room there that had been set aside for her use and that of her husband, she “looked over my books,” and “took such as I wanted” ([Manuscript 16a, 1885](#)). She visited here and there in Battle Creek, and was often drawn in with the brethren for counsel. On Sabbath morning she spoke in the Tabernacle. [290]

Sabbath afternoon she spoke again for about forty minutes. She declined an invitation to speak on temperance on Sunday in the public square, but she took an evening meeting at the Sanitarium, addressing about four hundred. Tuesday evening she read a manuscript of thirty pages to the faculty, physicians, and workers at the Sanitarium. It related to physicians, physician training, and other matters having to do with the institution. This was later published in a tract and is on file as [Manuscript 4a, 1885](#).

Closing up her activities in Battle Creek Wednesday morning, she took her noonday meal at the Sanitarium and was off to Massachusetts on the two-thirty train. Once settled in the car, she wrote a letter to A. R. Henry concerning matters at the Sanitarium. She was very weary when she arrived at Worcester, where she was to spend a few days joining D. M. Canright and R. S. Webber in their evangelistic tent meetings. Friday night, Sabbath morning, and again Sunday night, she spoke to large audiences. On Monday she drove the seventeen miles to South Lancaster, arriving in time for dinner. She noted in her diary that “dinner was acceptable, for we were hungry.”—[Manuscript 16a, 1885](#).

Here she was supposed to rest at the Harris home, but writing articles for the papers and letters to individuals she had begun at Worcester demanded her attention. On Friday, after writing for a few hours, at ten in the morning she left for Boston, where she and those traveling with her were to take ship for Southampton, England. As the S.S. *Cephalonia* was to leave Sabbath afternoon, the party embarked Friday afternoon so as to be settled before the Sabbath. She noted that “we accomplished this nearly.” Her stateroom was [291] large enough for the company to gather for Friday evening worship. She reported, “All take part. The Lord seems very near, and I feel peaceful and restful.”—*Ibid.*

More than a week was spent in crossing the Atlantic; most of it was pleasant, but one storm was encountered, followed by foggy weather. Ellen White was able to do quite a bit of writing—articles and letters, with the help of Mary and Sara McEnterfer. She noted: “We used the calligraph [typewriter] with good effect.”—*Ibid.*

Two Weeks in England

At Liverpool they were met by George Drew, who accompanied them to Grimsby, the city in which the mission headquarters was located. Thursday they went to the beach, but finding it cold and windy, Ellen White was glad to get back to their living quarters. Friday was a workday; recounting its activities, she recorded:

I have written ten pages of history of our journey, three pages to California, two to Marian Davis, and one to Brother E. P. Daniels. In the evening spoke in Temperance Hall upon the subject of temperance. The people gave the best of attention. It was raining and yet there were about 170 out to hear. May the word spoken drop like precious seed into the good soil.—*Ibid.*

She spent two weeks in England. The first Sabbath was at Grimsby. Of this day’s activities she reported:

Sabbath afternoon, when the little company of Sabbath-keepers assembled for worship, the room was full, and some were seated in the hall. I have ever felt

great solemnity in addressing large audiences, and have tried to place myself wholly under the guidance of the Saviour. But I felt even more solemn, if possible, in standing before this small company, who, in the face of obstacles, of reproach and losses, had stepped aside from the multitude who were making void the law of God, and had turned their feet into the way of His commandments.

In the afternoon a Sabbath school and social meeting were held. I spoke about thirty minutes in the meeting, and others followed. As I listened to the testimonies borne, I could not but think how similar is the experience of all true followers of Christ. There is but “one Lord, one faith, one baptism.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists](#), 162.

Sunday morning, August 23, she met with the believers again in the mission room, crowded full of interested listeners. In the evening she spoke in the town hall to an audience of about 1,200. Every seat was taken, and some people stood. The American lecturer was honored by the Union Temperance Prize Choir, of some fifty voices. They sang seven numbers, three at the opening, two at the close, and two after the benediction. The topic of Ellen White’s address was “The Love of God.” [292]

I tried to present the precious things of God in such a way as to draw their minds from earth to heaven. But I could only warn and entreat, and hold up Jesus as the center of attraction, and a heaven of bliss as the eternal reward of the overcomer.—[The Review and Herald](#), 162, 163.

Monday she was at Ulceby and spoke to a congregation of about a hundred; Tuesday she was at Riseley, some forty miles from London, where S. H. Lane and J. H. Durland were holding evangelistic meetings in a newly secured linen tent. Although the tent would seat three hundred, when Ellen White spoke in the evening many had to stand outside. The evangelistic meetings had been fruitful,

and a goodly company were convicted as the truths were presented. Thursday was a drizzly day; she spent it in London, taking the noonday meal with Henry Kellogg and W. C. White, who were there on publishing house business ([Manuscript 16a, 1885](#)). Kellogg, a former manager of the Review and Herald plant, was in Europe assisting in getting the new publishing house in Switzerland off to a good start.

At the mission in London on Friday, August 28, Ellen White met W. M. Jones, a Seventh Day Baptist minister laboring in the city. He took her and some who were traveling with her to the British Museum to view “ancient relics and curiosities.” She noted in her diary, “It would take more than one week to see the different interesting objects that have been collected together” (*Ibid.*), but she appreciated the two hours she had there.

[293] Then she took the train for Southampton and Durland’s home. That night she spoke to a small company of believers, and on Sabbath had two meetings. While visiting Southampton, she had an opportunity to see the Roman walls, some nine hundred years old. That Sunday night she spoke to a thousand people in a rented hall. The public press asked her to write up the address for publication, and she spent the next two days in London preparing the copy. On Wednesday they took the cars to the channel boat and were on their way to Basel, Switzerland.

On To Basel, Switzerland

[Three spellings were in common usage for the historic city in switzerland chosen by Seventh-day Adventists for their headquarters: Basel, bale, or basle, according to language preferences. “Basel” is employed in this account. In identifying cities and towns in europe and the names of individuals, the spelling used represents the opinions of european consultants.]

Crossing the English Channel by ship is often an uncomfortable experience, and so it was on Wednesday, September 2. However, even though many were seasick, Ellen White reported that she was not sick at all. But she does say, “We were glad, after one hour and a half’s ride, to step off the boat at Calais.”—[Manuscript 16a, 1885](#).

There they were met by a Mr. Brown, a literature evangelist in the city.

To secure a sleeping compartment to Basel would have cost \$11 apiece. They thought they had better spend an uncomfortable night and save the dollars. She described the night's travel:

A bed was made for me between the seats on the top of the satchels and telescope boxes. I rested some, but slept little. The rest took their chances on the seats. We were not sorry to have the night pass.—[Ibid.](#)

Morning came as they entered Basel. As they began to see buildings, including castles on the top of high rocks and mountains, the first thought that came to Ellen White's mind was—having recently finished writing *The Great Controversy*—“whether the Reformers had not visited these places.”

They were met at the train station by B. L. Whitney, president of the Swiss Mission, accompanied by R. F. Andrews and Albert Vuilleumier. Taking a hack, they drove to the publishing house, on the corner of Weiherweg and Rudolphstrasse. They were greeted by A. C. Bourdeau and were introduced to quite a number who had awaited their arrival ([Ibid.](#)).

As they entered the building Whitney said to her, “Look at our meeting hall before going upstairs.” Observing all the features of the large room, she said, “It is a good meeting hall. I feel that I have seen this place before.” She stepped into the offices across the hall for a brief look and then was taken to the pressroom, just below on the ground floor. The press was running, and she said, “I have seen this press before. This room looks very familiar to me.”

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Two young men were at work, and they were introduced to Ellen White. She shook hands with them and inquired, “Where is the other one?”

“What other one?” Whitney asked.

“There is an older man here,” she replied, “and I have a message for him.”

Whitney explained that the foreman of the pressroom was in the city on business ([Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 282, 283](#)). It was ten years before, in Battle Creek, on January 3, 1875, that

Ellen White was given a vision in which this publishing house and the foreman of the pressroom were shown to her. Needless to say, this experience brought courage to the heart of Whitney and his associates involved in the work in Basel.

After meeting many of the workers, Ellen White was escorted into the hydraulic elevator and taken to the third floor, where the Whitneys had an apartment, for breakfast and a rest. Before long she was shown what was to be her apartment, close to the one the W. C. White family would occupy. These, apparently, were on the south side of the building and had the advantage of exposure to the winter sun.

The Publishing House

The press building, constructed of stone, was forty-six by seventy-six feet. In the subbasement were the furnace and two gas motors that provided power for the presses. The next level, or ground floor, just slightly below ground level, provided room for the presses, bindery, the stereotype foundry, storage space for paper, and some storage space for the families living above. On the main floor to the right, or east, was the meeting hall, with seating capacity for three hundred; the other half was given to the business offices and the folding and mailing rooms.

[295] Typesetting was done on the second floor; here also were rooms for the editors, translators, and proofreaders. On the east side there was some family housing. The third floor was devoted entirely to living apartments.

Ellen White lost no time in getting to her writing. On the day she arrived she not only got settled but wrote twelve pages to Dr. Gibbs at the Rural Health Retreat, in California. The next day she wrote some thirty pages to a number of individuals. She was favorably impressed with the good location of the building, and by its construction—one “in keeping with the importance of the message that is being sent out from it” ([The Review and Herald, October 13, 1885](#)). She noted:

While sufficiently near the center of the town for all business purposes, it is far enough out to avoid the noise and confusion. The building faces the south, and

directly opposite is a sixty-acre common of government land, enclosed by trees. Just beyond this are buildings, and then come gentle hills with their sprinkling of fir trees, green fields, and cultivated lands. And back of all this rise higher mountains, forming a fine background to the lovely scene.—[Ibid.](#)

“To my mind,” she exclaimed, “a more beautiful location could not have been obtained.” Then her mind turned to the role of the city in religious history, being a place of great importance to the Protestant Reformers. Writing for the readers of the *Review*, she enumerated principal points, mentioning such names as Erasmus, Zwingli, John Foxe, and Frobenius, who published the writings of Luther. She declared:

As we looked upon our press, working off papers containing the light of truth for the present time, we could but think how much greater difficulties than we had met had been encountered in former times by the advocates of Bible truth. Every movement had to be made in secrecy, or their work would be destroyed and their lives imperiled. Now the way seems to be prepared for the truth to go forth as a lamp that burneth. The Bible standard is raised, and the same words that fell from the lips of the early reformers are being repeated. The Bible, and the Bible alone, is the foundation of our faith.

In the providence of God, our publishing house is located on this sacred spot. We could not wish for a more favorable location for the publication of truth in the different languages.... The work begun here in weakness will be carried on to a glorious consummation.—[Ibid.](#)

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Organization of the Work in Europe

It was in Switzerland that J. N. Andrews began his work when sent to Europe in late 1874, and here he started to publish as he was learning the French language. He died in Basel in 1883, and was buried there. In the late 1870s literature from America reached the

northern countries. In various places the minds of individuals, in one way or another, were called to the Sabbath truth, and workers were sent to augment Andrews' work. The interests of the church stretched out to France, Germany, Italy, and Romania, and companies of believers emerged. With minimal steps in organization, what came to be known as the Central European Mission developed. Work begun in Norway, Denmark, and Sweden culminated rather quickly in what were designated as the Norway and Denmark conferences; in England the work was known as the British Mission.

At a meeting attended by S. N. Haskell in Switzerland in 1882, the several emerging units were bound together in a parent organization known as the European Missionary Council. Each of the local organizations was managed by committees; the chairman of each was an ex-officio member of the European Missionary Council, which met annually.

In 1884 George I. Butler attended the second annual meeting of the European Missionary Council, held in Basel. At that time the loosely organized Central European Mission, the largest and strongest of the four local organizations in Europe, became the Swiss Conference. Organizational plans were perfected, and the decision was made to erect a publishing house in Basel. It was at this meeting that the invitation was extended for Ellen G. White to visit Europe and for W. C. White to aid in establishing the publishing business. Now the building was built, and Ellen White and her son were there for the first general meetings to be held in the publishing house chapel—first the Swiss Conference, scheduled to meet in session from September 10 to 14, and then the European Missionary Council, to open September 14.

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The Swiss Conference Session

The Swiss Conference consisted of 224 members in ten churches, and an additional thirty-nine Sabbathkeepers in groups. The members were served by one ordained minister and seven licensed ministers. There were 251 Sabbath school members, enrolled in eleven Sabbath schools.

Of the session that opened on Thursday evening, September 10, Ellen White wrote:

The conference was quite generally attended by our Swiss brethren, and by representatives from Germany, France, Italy, and Romania. There were nearly two hundred brethren and sisters assembled; and a more intelligent, noble-looking company is seldom seen. Although gathered from different nations, we were brought near to God and to one another by our eyes being fixed upon the one object, Jesus Christ. We were one in faith, and one in our efforts to do the will of God. The influence of the gospel is to unite God's people in one great brotherhood.—[Ibid.](#), November 3, 1885

Of course, not all assembled there could converse in one language. The congregation was divided into three parts, according to the language they understood. These were seated in different parts of the hall—French, German, and English. Ellen White found it a bit awkward and confusing when she first spoke, for her words were picked up by two translators, one speaking in French and the other in German. But with the audience divided into groups, time was conserved as the translators spoke to their respective groups at the same time. She soon found this method of addressing the conference less taxing than her usual manner of continuous speaking, for she had more time for thinking of the construction of what she would say ([Ibid.](#)).

Friday afternoon it was her turn to speak, and she was surprised at the large number assembled. It was a new experience to have Sister White with them, and the people did not want to miss a word. She described the weather as “cold and rough”: on Sabbath she added the word “muddy.” Of the Sabbath services she wrote:

The morning meetings are good and beneficial. Brother Bourdeau spoke in French in the forenoon. I spoke in the afternoon with great clearness. Testimonies were then borne—about one hundred. Brother A. C. Bourdeau gathered the English people together and interpreted the testimonies done in French. All expressed that they were impressed and benefited by the discourse given. Certainly this people seem to be in earnest to be

helped, willing to receive my testimony.—[Manuscript 16a, 1885](#).

Sunday was a sunny and interesting day. Reports were given in the morning meeting. Ellen White spoke for a half-hour on missionary work.

The Sunday afternoon meeting was memorable. She made particular mention of it in her report to the readers of the *Review*:

The Lord especially blessed in speaking Sunday afternoon. All listened with the deepest interest, and at the close of the discourse an invitation was given for all who desired to be Christians, and all who felt that they had not a living connection with God, to come forward, and we would unite our prayers with theirs for the pardon of sin, and for grace to resist temptation.

This was a new experience for many of our brethren in Europe, but they did not hesitate. It seemed that the entire congregation were on their feet, and the best they could do was to be seated, and all seek the Lord together. Here was an entire congregation manifesting their determination to put sin away, and to engage most earnestly in the work of seeking God.—[Ibid., November 3, 1885](#)

As this was an official session, there was business to attend to. Monday was the last day of the meeting, and business was cleared away by noon. Ellen White spoke again in the early afternoon, this time on the necessity of cultivating love and Christian courtesy and of being forbearing with one another ([Manuscript 16a, 1885](#)).

Following this timely message more than twelve were baptized, using the new baptistry in the meeting hall for the first time. Then they united in celebrating the ordinances of the Lord's house. In Ellen White's heart was the prayer that all would grow together in grace and in the knowledge of the truth as they climbed the ladder of progress in their Christian experience.

Chapter 24—(1885) The Meeting of the European Missionary Council [299]

The third session of the European Council of Seventh-day Adventist Missions opened Tuesday morning, September 15, in Basel, Switzerland. Twenty delegates from the Central European Mission, seven from the British Mission, six from the Scandinavian countries, and three representatives from North America were present. The delegates were joined by a substantial number of laymen who came in, largely from Switzerland but also a few from other countries. The meeting, which W. C. White described as a “miniature General Conference,” was to convene for a week, but as the work got under way it was extended to two full weeks. It was a time of spiritual refreshing, a time of learning, and a time of constructive planning for the work of God in new and varied fields. Ellen White divided her time between writing and diligent public labor, as was usually the case in a meeting of this kind.

The session opened at 11:00 A.M., but for Ellen White the day started much earlier. She wrote of it in her diary:

It is a beautiful morning. Rose at five and commenced writing. Have written four pages before breakfast. Brethren Lane, John, and Wilcox [workers from England] have come, and Sister Lane and Sister Jenny Thayer. Wrote eight pages to Elder Butler, two pages to Sister Lockwood, two pages to May Walling.—
[Manuscript 16a, 1885.](#)

Establishing the Daily Program

The opening of the council was accompanied by the usual formalities: song; prayer; a welcome from B. L. Whitney, who would serve as chairman of the council; and the appointment of committees. The daily program included an early-morning devotional [300]

meeting at half past five, business meetings morning and afternoon, and a practical sermon in the evening. Committee meetings filled the rest of the first day.

With the afternoon devoted to committee meetings, Ellen White for the first time had an opportunity to slip away for a little sightseeing. Of this she wrote in her diary:

We rode out for the first time since coming to Basel. We crossed the Rhine and entered Germany. The bridge across the Rhine was built upon strongly made boats. The Rhine is a swift-running stream. We saw milk cows harnessed up as horses to plow and to draw loads of vegetables and fruits in their wagons. We saw women wheeling heavy wheelbarrows and drawing hand wagons.

We passed by the hotel of the Three Kings. There are three large life-size statues. This is the most noted hotel in Basel. The kings and nobles stop at this hotel.

Wrote twelve pages [eight pages to Elder Butler, two pages to Sister Lockwood, two pages to May Walling].—[Manuscript 16a, 1885](#). (Somewhat rearranged for continuity.)

Ellen White was the devotional speaker at five-thirty Wednesday morning. This was her first meeting with the workers who had come in especially to the council. She directed her remarks to the necessity of cultivating love and tenderness for one another.

A Bible Institute Proposed

At the nine o'clock business meeting W. C. White spoke of making the most profitable use of the time they would spend together. He suggested that a Bible institute, devoted to giving Bible readings and the investigation of difficult Bible subjects, be held through the meeting. Bible studies prepared in America could be revised and translated into French, German, and Danish-Norwegian and serve as the basis of their work. He suggested also that an English class could be held for those who might wish to attend.

Accordingly, the daily program was adjusted to include a nine o'clock Bible class, which J. G. Matteson conducted. Suggested topics were the second advent of Christ, the millennium, and the return of the Jews—matters of special interest in Europe. Each evening at six-thirty, three Bible reading classes would be held, with S. H. Lane leading out in English, J. Ertzenberger teaching the German class, and A. C. Bourdeau taking the French group. Provision was made for answering questions that could be discussed with profit, and a question box was provided. [301]

So the stage was set for a very profitable council, with daily reports from the various fields of labor, business sessions, and daily periods devoted to the study of the Bible and the English language.

Evangelistic Use of Literature

Special attention was given early to the circulation of evangelistic literature, both periodicals and books. Church leaders had hoped that with so few ministers in the countries of Europe, the third angel's message could be spread largely through publications distributed by colporteurs. But the reports of literature sales from door to door were disheartening. During the preceding year sales in the Scandinavian countries amounted to \$1,033; Great Britain reported \$950; and the Central European Mission, which without books in German and French had to work with periodicals, reported sales of \$1,010.

The literature evangelists reported that the people of Europe were not accustomed to purchasing books or magazines from door-to-door salespersons, but secured them from bookstores. Colporteurs and church leaders, especially those from Catholic countries, urged that the literature evangelists must be supported by salaries, which was the custom of leading evangelical societies ([Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 284](#)).

This was a crisis moment for the work of the church in Europe, but one that did not take the Lord by surprise. Already He had instructed His servant that books could be sold successfully in Europe by thoroughly trained, dedicated colporteurs. So Ellen White was prepared. She talked courage:

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When the work goes hard, and you become discouraged and are tempted to abandon it, take your Bible, bow upon your knees before God, and say, "Here, Lord, Thy word is pledged." Throw your weight upon His promises, and every one of them will be fulfilled.—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists](#), 153.

When the discouraging reports of the colporteurs reached a climax, she declared that in spite of all the difficulties, the workers must have faith that success would attend their labors. She told them that she had been shown that books could be sold in Europe to give support to the workers, and bring sufficient returns to the publishing house to enable it to produce more books. She declared:

God will soon do great things for us if we lie humble and believing at His feet.... More than one thousand will soon be converted in one day, most of whom will trace their first convictions to the reading of our publications.—[The Review and Herald, November 10, 1885](#) (in D. T. Bourdeau report).

Study was given to tract distribution as an evangelistic thrust. W. C. White told of the plan used in America of placing tract distributors (racks) in railroad stations, hotels, and public places. From these the public could select, without charge, appropriate publications. This would augment the work of the ministers and colporteurs. There was a wholesome discussion of the tract work. England, with its traveling public and recreational spots and its steamships leaving for different parts of the world, seemed to offer a promising opportunity for working in this line. It was voted:

That we request the International Tract Society to furnish distributors, or the means by which distributors can be obtained, to be placed on the transatlantic steamers leaving Liverpool.—[Ibid., November 3, 1885](#)

Another action aimed at upgrading missionary literature called for the use of illustrations in the various periodicals. As to the larger literature ministry, the following action was taken:

Whereas, The work is great and laborers few, and the greater part of the work of enlightening the people on the subject of present truth must be done by the means of publications; therefore—*Resolved*, That it is the duty of our ministers to encourage and educate young persons to become successful canvassers and colporteurs, by holding institutes, and by connecting them with tent labor and other work, where it may be deemed advisable, thus helping them to obtain the necessary qualifications for this work.—*Ibid.*

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The next action called for a colporteur institute of three to four weeks, to be held in England.

Within a few years, with the thorough training of colporteurs, it was found that Adventist literature could be sold widely in the countries of Europe.

The Thrust of Public Evangelism

The council turned its attention to those methods in public evangelism that could be employed successfully in Europe. The varied circumstances and divergent customs in different countries had a bearing on the discussions.

Halls for meetings were hard to secure and often expensive. In England a tent had been used successfully. A. A. John, from Wales, reported that working in what was known as “the watering places,” which drew the upper classes and wealthy, gave good promise. He had been holding open-air meetings and was thoroughly convinced that this was the way to go. Ellen White was drawn into the discussions on Sunday, September 20. Of this she wrote to the president of the General Conference:

I attended the morning session of the council. I was requested to speak in regard to holding tent meetings in Europe. I told them that according to the light the Lord had given me, tents could be used to good advantage in some places, and if conducted properly, would result in great good. I did not know at the time why they had

called me out on this, but learned it was because Brother John had previously spoken rather against tents being the best for meetinghouse purposes.

I then presented my objections in regard to open-air meetings. They are very wearing to our ministers, because [they are] taxing to the vocal organs. The voice is strained to an unnatural pitch, and would be greatly injured by this method of labor.

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Another objection was that discipline and order could not be preserved; such labor would not encourage studious habits in diligently searching the Scriptures to bring from God's storehouse things both new and old. The worker is not qualifying himself to become a thorough workman; he cannot possibly prove his own work by concentrating his labors to bring out and organize a church. He does not do the very work so essential to be done, not only to preach but to follow up his labor by ministering, by becoming acquainted with interested ones, going to their homes, opening to them the Scriptures around the fireside, making plain essential points of present truth, and removing the objections which always will arise when the truth is brought in conflict with error.

The Bible talks, the humble, earnest prayer with the family, accomplish a greater work than the most powerful discourses can accomplish without this personal effort. In the open-air meeting there cannot be that complete work done in binding off the work.... Sometimes great good may be done by this manner of labor. But as a practice it is better to reach the people in some other way.—[Letter 23, 1885](#).

Tents were being employed successfully in America, where more than a hundred tent meetings were reported to be in progress. She pointed out that evangelists should know what they are doing and for whom they are laboring. The work should be thoroughly bound off, so that it would not ravel out. One report of this meeting stated:

She [Ellen White] thought that tent meetings are one of the very best ways to conduct religious services, and that according to the light given her, God will bless such meetings in Europe. When one is speaking in a tent there is not as much strain on the voice, which should be carefully cultured and managed. The melody of the voice should be preserved. It is one of the greatest instrumentalities in the hands of God for the salvation of souls.—[The Review and Herald, November 3, 1885.](#)

The better part of two days was given to the matter of tents and their use in evangelism. At the end of the discussion it was voted to recommend:

(1) That a second tent be purchased for use in England [for] the coming season; (2) that a tent be obtained in time for use [for] the coming season in Sweden; (3) That the Swiss Conference purchase two tents, one for the German and one for the French work; (4) That we request the General Conference to furnish a tent for use in Italy.—*SDA Yearbook*, 1886, p. 95.

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Elder John, who favored a different type of work at the “watering places,” was most unhappy and distressed and let it be known.

Problems Unique to Europe

During the council, study was given to several problems faced by Seventh-day Adventists in certain European countries. One was compulsory military service, which was brought to the floor through the committee on resolutions:

Should we bear arms, or serve in the army? and if so, is it lawful to serve on the Sabbath?

The published report of the meeting is:

With reference to this, it was moved that the Executive Committee of the Council prepare a circular

treating upon this subject, offering suggestions in regard to it for the instruction of our brethren. From the ensuing discussion it appeared that military service is compulsory in Switzerland, Germany, France, and Italy. The length of service required varies in the different countries, but the service is such that it is very difficult to keep the Sabbath.—*Ibid.*, November 3, 1885

[306] Then there was the perplexing matter of compulsory school attendance of Adventist children on the Sabbath. [See E. G. White counsel on school attendance on the sabbath in *Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists*, 216-218, and *Testimony Treasures*, Vol. 2, pp. 180-185.] In Switzerland all children between the ages of 6 and 14 were required to be in school six days of the week, and no arrangement could be made for them to be excused on the Sabbath. Some parents who kept their children at home on the Sabbath had been fined, some imprisoned. Ellen White counseled faithfulness to God, regardless of circumstances. Two alternatives were suggested: (1) Establishing a church school in Basel, and (2) getting up a petition to be circulated, to be accompanied by appropriate tracts and leaflets.

Among the many resolutions passed during the two-week session was the following:

Resolved, That we express our gratitude to God for the labor and counsel of Sister E. G. White and her son, Elder W.C. White, at these meetings; that we invite them to visit Scandinavia, Great Britain, and other fields, and to remain sufficiently long in Europe to do the work Providence has assigned them.—*Ibid.*

This settled the question as to whether Ellen White would attend the next session of the General Conference scheduled for November. She would not.

The Test Comes to Daniel Bourdeau

On Wednesday, September 23, a small group met to consider certain moves that should be made to advance the cause. In the

group were Ellen White; Daniel Bourdeau and Marian, his wife; A. C. Bourdeau and his wife, Martha; B. L. Whitney and his wife; and H. W. Kellogg. The fields of labor for certain of the workers was discussed, and then Daniel Bourdeau came forward with an interesting and potentially explosive proposition. Ellen White's diary gives the picture:

Daniel then presented his plans that France and Italy be not encouraged to unite with Switzerland but become a separate conference and use their means among themselves to build up their own conference. This I earnestly opposed, for the influence would be bad. It would not lead to union and harmony in the work, but to separate interests, and they would not labor for that oneness that the Lord demands.—[Manuscript 16a, 1885](#).

Bourdeau argued that each one of the national groups was jealous and independent and therefore would resent being a part of the Swiss Conference. Ellen White suggested that this was a strong reason why each group should learn to blend with other nationalities. As she reported the experience to the president of the General Conference, she said:

I told Brother Daniel that this would not be in accordance with God's will.... The truth is one. It will take people from France and Italy, and, mingling them with other elements, soften and refine them through the truth.—[Letter 23, 1885](#).

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She pointed out that the cause was still in its infancy in the European countries and that to follow this suggestion would result in weakness. In the face of this dissent, Bourdeau grew excited and declared that he had been abused as he had labored in the cause, and cited examples. Ellen White walked out of the room. When she next wrote in her diary, she declared: "I will not give sanction to any such spirit."—[Manuscript 16a, 1885](#).

As she reported the conference in the *Review and Herald*, she told of her emphasis given through the council:

I felt urged by the Spirit of God throughout the meetings to impress upon all the importance of cultivating love and unity. I tried to present the danger of building up separate interests between nationalities. We are all bound together in the great web of humanity, and all that we do has a relation to others.—[The Review and Herald, November 3, 1885.](#)

She spoke Thursday morning at the devotional hour. With the meeting in which Bourdeau had taken such a strong position clearly in her mind, she again directed her remarks to the unity that should exist between the different nationalities. She stated:

Some who have entered these missionary fields have said, “You do not understand the French people; you do not understand the Germans. They have to be met in just such a way.” But, I inquire, does not God understand them? Is it not He who gives His servants a message for the people?—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 136.](#)

She employed the illustration of the Jewish temple. Its stones were quarried out of the mountains, but when they were brought together they formed a perfect building. Then with great candor she declared:

Let no one think that there need not be a stroke placed upon him. There is no person, no nation, that is perfect in every habit and thought. One must learn of another. Therefore God wants the different nationalities to mingle together, to be one in judgment, one in purpose. Then the union that there is in Christ will be exemplified.—[Ibid., 137.](#)

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She stated that she had been almost afraid to come to Europe because she had heard so much about the peculiarities of the various nationalities. But then she realized that God could bring people where they would receive the truth. She urged:

Look to Jesus, brethren; copy His manners and spirit, and you will have no trouble in reaching these different classes. We have not six patterns to follow, nor five. We have only one, and that is Christ Jesus. If the Italian brethren, the French brethren, and the German brethren try to be like Him, they will plant their feet upon the same foundation of truth; the same spirit that dwells in one, will dwell in the other—Christ in them, the hope of glory. I warn you, brethren and sisters, not to build up a wall of partition between different nationalities. On the contrary, seek to break it down wherever it exists....

Labor for unity, labor for love, and you may become a power in the world.—[Ibid.](#), 137, 138.

The counsel was quite in line with the theme she had kept before the council. She made no reference to any individual. But Daniel Bourdeau jumped to his feet and declared that the remarks had been directed to him personally, and he tried to vindicate himself. Writing of it to Butler, Ellen White explained:

I had, during the meeting, spoken upon general principles.... Now I had overturned his imaginary castle that he was building, and he acted as though he had received his death blow.—[Letter 23, 1885.](#)

Bourdeau absented himself from the meetings through the day and began to pack his belongings, planning to leave the next morning. Ellen White was greatly distressed. She wrote in her diary that Daniel had been “taking counsel with Daniel and the adversary of souls” ([Ibid.](#)). She pleaded with God for the man, and she felt urged to speak to him again. As she paced the floor of her room in great agony of mind, she kept saying to herself, “I cannot talk with him; I cannot meet his defiant, stubborn spirit.” But she knew she must, so she sent for him and his wife to come to her room, along with his brother and Whitney, Lane, and White.

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As she began to talk directly to Daniel, he interrupted, saying he would rather see her alone because of the things he had suffered

from his brethren in the past. She told him she wished him to be silent, for she had the word of the Lord for him. He quieted down. Then she gave him “such a message as I wish never to speak again to mortal man” ([Ibid.](#)).

It seemed to her that Bourdeau was in a life-and-death struggle, and she must warn him of his danger. He complained that she had hit him with her talk that morning, but she reminded him that he had stood where he could easily be hit. She reported to Butler the admonition she gave to Bourdeau:

The arrows of the Almighty must wound you so sorely that you will feel that you need a physician. “I have torn,” saith God, “and I will heal; I have smitten and I will bind you up.” When you come, meek and lowly, then Jesus will pardon your transgressions.—
[Ibid.](#)

She charged him not to leave the house till the power of the enemy was broken. Then they all knelt and prayed. “He prayed for himself rather faintly,” wrote Ellen White. She prayed, as did others. She recognized that a terrible struggle was going on with Daniel. He made some concessions, but not full surrender. “His face,” she said, “looked as though soul and body were rent asunder.”—[Ibid.](#) But the Sabbath was drawing on.

That Friday evening a meeting was planned for the ministers alone. The down-to-earth discussions of the past few days had brought to the front several sore spots, as cherished positions held by some had failed to gain approval. A. A. John, from the British field, was still upset because he received no encouragement to proceed with his plans to make large efforts at the “watering places,” where the wealthy would assemble in the vacation season. To labor in these circumstances was costly and promised but little in returns. Others also had injured feelings. Ellen White faced the meeting with some trepidation. She feared Daniel Bourdeau would not be there. Her diary tells the story:

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There were present about seventeen ministers and their wives. Brother Daniel Bourdeau was present. The

Spirit of the Lord rested upon me, and I prayed for light and grace from heaven. My faith laid hold upon the promises of the Lord, and His Spirit came into our meeting in large measure. Hearts were broken before Him.

Brother Daniel Bourdeau wrenched himself from the shackles of Satan, and surrendered his will to the Lord. Satan had thought to gain the victory over this brother, but he was signally defeated. Angels of God were in the meeting, and the power of God was felt.

Brother Albert Vuilleumier prayed in French, but we understood the spirit that inspired it. Brother Matteson's petition was indited by the Lord, and was offered in brokenness of heart. I felt the peace of Jesus in my soul. I had carried a heavy load, and now I rolled that load upon the great Burden Bearer. I could do nothing; Jesus could do everything; and I felt the peace of Christ in my heart.—[Manuscript 20, 1885](#).

A Vision Depicting the Workers as God Saw Them

In the hours of that night Ellen White was given a significant and solemn vision and was able to sleep but little. Before going into the early Sabbath morning devotional meeting, she spent time in prayer. Then she made her way to the small room where the workers were to meet at six o'clock. She found twenty-three there. She opened the meeting with prayer. Heaven seemed near. Daniel Bourdeau prayed next and confessed his weakness in yielding to the temptations of the enemy. "He made a more full surrender to God," noted Ellen White, "and light from God shone into his heart."—[Ibid.](#)

Her remarks that Sabbath morning related to the holy character of the work and the necessity of improving the talents God has given.

Vividly this stood out in her mind as she addressed the workers that Sabbath morning on the sacred character of the work in which they were engaged, and the need of their improving the talents God had bestowed upon them.

On Sabbath afternoon Ellen White spoke again in the chapel. She had chosen her text, [Zechariah 3:1](#): "And he shewed me Joshua

[311] the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.” Then the Lord led her mind into an unexpected channel. Addressing by name some before her, she bore testimony of encouragement to certain individuals in the audience. In words of hope for Mrs. A. B. Oyen, she exhorted her to take Christ as her Saviour, looking away from the imperfections of self to Jesus, believing that He alone could remove her defects and give her His righteousness. Speaking to her in pointed language, Ellen White said, “Jesus stands at the door of your heart my sister, knocking for entrance, inviting you to let Him in. Will you hear His voice? Will you open the door? Will you renounce self and welcome Jesus? ...What answer have you to give?”—*Ibid.*

Then she turned to a discouraged, self-effacing woman, the one later pictured in [Steps to Christ, 116, 117](#) as walking in sadness in a garden. Straying from the path and finding herself beset by briars and thorns, she saw the garden spoiled by thorns rather than gathering “the roses, the lilies, and the pinks.” Ellen White said to her:

Sister Martha Bourdeau, Jesus loves you. Why gather about your soul the clouds of darkness? Why walk in a fog of unbelief? ...Come just as you are, helpless and hopeless.—[Manuscript 20, 1885.](#)

After quoting a number of precious promises, she again addressed Martha directly:

My sister, have you not every encouragement to gather up your confidence? Have you endeavored not only to believe in Christ but to live in your daily life as His disciple?—*Ibid.*

That Sabbath afternoon meeting brought courage to many hearts. The remaining two days of the council bore witness to the fruitage of the messages presented. Sunday morning, September 27, Ellen White urged the workers to be of one mind and of one judgment, ready to receive advice and counsel from one another. She pointed out that:

The Lord can do nothing for us unless we submit to His molding hand. We must be molded as clay is molded in the hands of the potter.... A strong, determined will is essential, but it should be under submission. It should not bear the mold of selfishness, but the grace of Christ should be seen in all the words and ways.—[Ibid.](#)

[312]

The response that Sunday morning was most gratifying. Ellen White was pleased to write of it in her diary:

Many precious testimonies were borne. Sister Oyen spoke more hopefully....

Brother Oyen bore an excellent testimony....

Brother Matteson's testimonies tell on the right side every time. He has been a blessing all through these meetings.

Many humble confessions have been made, and many tears shed. A blessed work is being done for Brother Daniel Bourdeau. He seems to be clothed in his right mind.

Sister Martha Bourdeau [wife of A. C.] bore a good testimony. She says that she will trust in God, that she will dismiss her doubts, that she will no longer deplore her darkness, but will talk of the light, of Jesus and His love and mercy....

For the first time since our meetings began, Brother John surrendered his ideas and his set notions of laboring in large watering places.—[Ibid.](#)

This was indeed a significant victory.

Attitudes Toward the Spirit of Prophecy

When the council assembled Sunday evening for their first business meeting of the new week, it is quite understandable that the first action read:

Resolved, That we express our continued confidence in the gift of prophecy, which God has mercifully placed among His remnant people, and that we will endeavor to show our true appreciation of the same by practically carrying out its instructions.—[The Review and Herald, November 3, 1885](#).

Monday afternoon, September 28, as the council neared its close, a resolution was passed calling for a permanent record of the main features of the work done. It bears the marks of the mind of W. C. White, for several years the secretary of the General Conference Foreign Mission Board and a publishing man through and through:

[313]

Resolved, That the report of this council, the financial and statistical report of the European mission, with the report of Sister White's morning talks and a sketch of her visit to the missions, be published in a large-page pamphlet in the English language, that our brethren in America may share the blessing of this good meeting.—[Ibid.](#)

We today rejoice in the 294-page volume titled *Historical Sketch of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists*. [Available from leaves of autumn books, P.O. Box 440, Payson, Arizona 85541.] It reports overseas activities in Australia as well as Europe.

On the last evening of the council Ellen White spoke briefly on the importance of taking advantage of the opportunities for labor close at home. Workers should take their Bibles and with humble hearts sit down with families and open the Scriptures, bringing in the harvest in a humble fashion. J. G. Matteson preached the evening sermon, and Albert Vuilleumier was ordained to the ministry. In this service, D. T. Bourdeau, whom Ellen White pronounced “a converted man” ([Manuscript 24, 1885](#)), offered in French one of the two ordination prayers. The other, in English, was offered by S. H. Lane.

The last meeting of the council was held at 7:00 A.M. Tuesday morning, September 29. It was given to some remarks and to two routine business matters. Ellen White admonished all to fight the

good fight of faith and to keep their hearts in the love of God and resist all doubts. “Our hearts have been drawn together at this meeting by the love of Christ,” she said. “Let that love be cherished.”—*Ibid.*

On one of the last days of the council, she observed:

All through this meeting we have striven for harmony and unity, and I think that there is now a better state of things. All accept the words I speak, although at times they are very close and pointed.—*Manuscript 20, 1885.*

Sequel—Daniel Bourdeau’s Report

Daniel Bourdeau had accepted the third angel’s message at the age of 22. Soon after his conversion he had been given strong evidence of Ellen White’s call and work, for on June 28, 1857, he had witnessed her in vision. He later declared, “Since witnessing this wonderful phenomenon, I have not once been inclined to doubt.”—In A. L. White, *Ellen G. White, Messenger to the Remnant*, p. 24. But when the testimony of Ellen White touched his life, he almost floundered. He reported his experience of victory in *Ibid., November 10, 1885.* His report opened with words that reflected his attitude:

[314]

This council is among the precious gatherings of the past. Of all the general meetings of our people I have attended in twenty-nine years, I think of none that could be more properly pronounced a success, in every sense of that term, than this one. Christian love and union prevailed throughout. There was a wonderful blending of nationalities, all seeming to feel that the cause was one, that our aim was one, and that we must unitedly push on the work to certain victory.

He then turned to the matter that came close to him in his personal struggle to relate to the Spirit of Prophecy counsels:

The labors of Sister White and her son, Elder W. C. White, were highly appreciated at this general gathering....

How interesting and wonderful it was to hear Sister White correctly delineate the peculiarities of different fields she had seen only as the Lord had shown them to her, and show how they should be met; to hear her describe case after case of persons she had never seen with her natural vision, and either point out their errors or show important relations they sustained to the cause, and how they should connect with it to better serve its interests!

As I had a fair chance to test the matter, having been on the ground, and knowing that no one had informed Sister White of these things, while serving as an interpreter, I could not help exclaiming, "It is enough. I want no further evidence of its genuineness."

Then he gave some even more intimate reasons for his confidence, reasons tied in with his own personal experience:

[315]

Not only does this gift reprove sin without dissimulation and partiality, as did Nathan when he said to David, "Thou art the man," but it deals in words of encouragement to help those reprov'd to overcome, and to inspire hope, faith, and courage to the desponding. It not only probes the wound, but it also pours in the oil, binds the wound, and hastens the process of restoration. It brings the receiver to the Bible, and earnestly endeavors to carry out the instructions it enjoins, exemplifying in a marked degree the rare graces of modesty, true humility, and self-denial.

It identifies itself with those for whom it labors, bearing their burdens in earnest, persevering prayer, forgetful of self and ease, and keeping the glory of God and the salvation of souls in view, aiming to secure these at any sacrifice. It brings with it the supernatural discernment that Peter evinced in the case of Ananias and Sapphira. It brings with it the miraculous, without which, religion were a formal, heartless, lifeless, human

affair, and for want of which the masses of religionists of today are perishing.

True to its name, it deals in prophetic utterances in harmony with the Bible, to help those who fear God to properly and speedily perform the gospel work, and to safely pass through the perils of the last days. The instrument presents no attractions from the standpoint of show and popularity, that, following the path of humility, the gift may help in the work of converting men to God and not to man, and that God may have all the praise.

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Chapter 25—(1885) A Visit to Scandinavia

With the action in mind taken by the European Missionary Council that called for Ellen White and W. C. White “to visit Scandinavia, Great Britain, and other fields, and to remain sufficiently long in Europe to do the work Providence has assigned them” (*Ibid.*, November 3, 1885), she slipped out and purchased a lightweight book with 194 blank pages, lightly ruled. On the flyleaf she wrote:

Mrs. E. G. White, Bale, Switzerland. This book is to give incidents of my travel in Europe, 1885-1886.

Her first entry bears the date of September 25, 1885, and picks up the story of the European Missionary Council in session. It is a valuable book, particularly to the biographer as he attempts to trace her journeys and experience in Europe. The account of her work there, in this present volume, can pick up only the high points of her fruitful labor. [A detailed account of Ellen White’s two years in Europe is presented in the volume *Ellen G. White in Europe*, prepared in the White Estate offices by D. A. Delafield and published by the review and herald.]

The summer months, rather than early winter, would have been far more favorable for her visit to the countries of northern Europe, where the work of the church was developing quite nicely. But there was some uncertainty as to how soon she would return to America. So at the close of the council the decision was reached calling for her to start on the rounds almost immediately. Of this she wrote:

[317]

We felt that the safest course was to visit the leading churches in Scandinavia at the earliest opportunity. The condition of some of these churches had been presented to me in years past, with many things showing that Denmark, Norway, and Sweden were promising fields of labor. We knew that a great work lay before the missionaries in this field. They desired our counsel about the

different branches of the work, and we felt that we could advise with them to much better advantage after making them a visit. It seemed unwise to postpone till another summer this part of the work which we had made the long journey from America to accomplish.—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists](#), 174.

Consequently, on October 6, just one week after the council closed, the party of four left Basel—Ellen White, W. C. White, Sara McEnterfer, and Cecile Dahl. Cecile was from Christiania (Oslo), Norway, and would serve as guide and interpreter. It was an overnight trip to Frankfurt, Germany, then on to Hamburg. At Kiel, on the Baltic Sea, they took the ferry to Denmark. Ellen White found this trip through the northern countries an interesting experience.

Visit to Denmark

They were met Thursday morning at Copenhagen, Denmark, by J. G. Matteson. He took the travelers to his home and led them up six flights of stairs to the apartment occupied by his family. While it was somewhat of a struggle to get to the apartment, once there Ellen White found it afforded a fascinating view:

Just across the street were beautiful grounds which had the appearance of an extensive park or garden. We were somewhat surprised to learn that it was a cemetery. The tombstones were mostly concealed from view by trees and shrubbery. Evergreen hedges separated the enclosures, and choice flowers and shrubs were scattered everywhere. Close by was the large botanical garden and floral nursery, containing rare trees and shrubs, and the most beautiful flowers in almost endless variety.

Toward the sea we saw the huge windmills used for grinding grain. A little to the right is the glistening dome of the Greek church. This dome, we are told, is overlaid with gold.—[Ibid.](#), 179, 180.

[318] Seventh-day Adventists in Copenhagen worshiped in a little hall on the fourth story of a building not far from the Matteson apartment. Friday evening Ellen White spoke to about thirty-five who assembled there. A third of these constituted the local church group; the others came in from adjacent churches. Her topic was “The Parable of the Fig Tree.” She found the hall to be damp and cold, but Sabbath morning she was back. Although suffering from some teeth that had been improperly treated, a problem accentuated by the cold and dampness of the hall, she spoke to the well-filled room on “The True Vine.”

Halls where religious meetings might be held were difficult to secure in Denmark, but one was found, a basement room capable of seating two hundred but equipped for only half that number. Meetings were held each evening throughout the week. One evening, attempts were made by half-intoxicated rowdies to break up the meeting. Commented Ellen White, “If it is necessary to speak in such places, we will do so cheerfully.” She added an interesting note:

There were some in the audience who seemed deeply interested, persons of talent whose countenances I remembered, for they had been presented before me. These persons had been pleasure lovers, enshrouded in darkness and error, but God was permitting beams of light to shine upon them from His Word.... I felt such an intense interest while speaking to these souls that I lost sight of my surroundings; I felt that some were in the valley of decision, and I longed to see them take their stand fully and decidedly upon the side of Christ.—[Ibid.](#), 183.

As there was opportunity, she, Willie, and Sara were guided by Matteson in some sightseeing. She admired the broad streets, the spacious ground around large buildings, and the “ships standing in the inlet of water, crowded as thick as possible” ([Manuscript 25, 1885](#)). But she found Copenhagen a city in dire need of Christ’s saving power. She spoke five times while there, and then the traveling worker group left by ship for Sweden.

Visit to Sweden

“We left Copenhagen this morning,” wrote Ellen White in her diary for Thursday, October 15, on the steamer for Malmö, Sweden ([Manuscript 21, 1885](#)).

Both her diaries and letters abound in references to the historical and religious significance of cities and towns she passed through or visited. She gleaned information from brochures and by visiting with those familiar with the circumstances. [319]

A night’s trip by train took them to Stockholm, where they were met by a Brother Norlin, who took the worker group to his home. Ellen White wrote of him as one who, in humble circumstances, was earnestly seeking to spread the knowledge of the truth, laboring as a colporteur:

Shouldering his pack, stocked with our books and papers, he goes on foot from place to place, often traveling many miles a day. His profits have been very small.... On one of the large bound books [imported from America] he received but five cents a copy, on some other books only three cents. On those works published at our office in Christiania he received one-third discount....

Brother Norlin’s wife is an industrious worker, doing housecleaning, washing, or any other kind of hard work by which she can help in gaining a livelihood. They live in a very economical manner, occupying one good-sized room on a fourth floor, with the use of a small kitchen with another family.—[Ibid., 189](#).

After pointing out that this is a sample of how the work had to be done in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, she declared:

Those who are thus traveling on foot and carrying the books and papers in their leathern sacks are apparently engaged in a humble work; but they should not feel that it is in any sense degrading. It was in a humble manner that Christ labored when he was on the earth; He went on foot from place to place, teaching as He

walked. Those who are spreading a knowledge of the truth are scattering precious light that some souls will accept. In the kingdom of God the fruit of their labors will be seen.—[Ibid.](#)

[320] While in Stockholm she and Sara were entertained in the home of a Sister Johanneson, who had lived in America and could speak English quite well. It was a comfortable home, heated by tall earthen stoves that reached nearly to the ceiling. Ellen White much enjoyed and appreciated the comfort provided.

The worker group was in Stockholm from Friday to Wednesday morning, October 21, with meetings Friday evening, Sabbath morning, and then Sunday and Monday evenings. Of the Sabbath morning meeting held in a small public hall, Ellen White noted in her diary, “We call this a *good day*. The Lord strengthened me to speak to His people with clearness and power.” She then referred to prevailing sentiments she met:

There is a spurious experience that is prevailing now everywhere in regard to the love of Jesus—that we must dwell on the love of Jesus, that faith in Jesus is all we need—but these souls must be instructed that the love of Jesus in the heart will lead to humility of life and obedience to all His commandments....

Those who reject the truth of the Bible do it under a pretense of loving Jesus. Those who love Jesus will reveal that love by being obedient children. They will be doers of the Word and not hearers only. They will not be continually pleading, “All that we have to do is to believe in Jesus.” This is true in the fullest sense, but they do not comprehend, they do not take it in its fullest sense. To believe in Jesus is to take Him as your Redeemer, as your Pattern. All who love Jesus must follow His example.”—[Manuscript 26, 1885.](#)

Before the meeting that Sabbath morning, Matteson thought to give her a little guidance in the matter of the subject she should present. His suggestion was:

That it would please the people if I speak less about duty and more in regard to the love of Jesus. But I wish to speak as the Spirit of the Lord shall impress me. The Lord knows best what this people needs. I spoke in the forenoon from [Isaiah 58](#). I did not round the corners at all. If this is Brother Matteson's work, let him do it, but it is not my work. My work is to elevate the standard of piety and true Christian life, and urge the people to put away their sins and be sanctified through the truth. I tried to impress them with the necessity of strictly observing the Sabbath according to the commandment.—[Ibid.](#)

In the social meeting that followed the sermon, the people expressed their thankfulness that the Lord sent them help from America, and revealed their gratitude to God for the truth and for the increased light Mrs. White had given them. They could see, they said, as they had not done before, “the necessity of greater strictness in keeping the Sabbath and could sense the offensive character of sin, and they would make earnest efforts to put sin away” ([Ibid.](#)). [321]

After a successful meeting Sunday night, with the hall crowded and many standing, Ellen White expressed her disappointment in the unfavorable accommodations. The repetition of such experiences led her to appeal for more faith and vision as to what could be done if proper preparations were made.

The visit to Sweden included a few days at Grythytted, 150 miles northwest of Stockholm, and then Orebro, meeting with companies of believers at each place. In imagination she relived the days of the reformation, and then the preaching of the Advent message in Sweden in 1842 and 1843, when the mouths of those who would herald the message were closed by authorities. In these circumstances the power of God came upon several children, and they heralded the message and called upon the people to get ready. [See [The Great Controversy](#), 366, 367.] After reviewing the experience, she wrote in her account of her visit to Sweden:

Years ago, the work of the first [angel's] message in these countries was presented before me, and I was

shown circumstances similar to those related above. It was God's will that the tidings of the Saviour's coming should be given in Sweden, and when the voices of His servants were silenced, He put His spirit upon the children, that the work might be accomplished.—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists](#), 206.

She had an opportunity to see firsthand the adverse circumstances of many in regard to the Sabbath. She wrote:

Worldly prosperity is not often the lot of those who receive the truth. Our brethren in America have but little idea of the difficulties to be met by those who keep the Sabbath in these countries....

[322]

Many a man works for thirty-five cents a day in the summer, and fifteen in the winter. Most of our people are poor, and it is very difficult for them to obtain work, even at low prices.... There are many who have to lift a heavy cross, and walk by faith, not by sight. Many suffer poverty and reproach; but this should not prevent them from obeying God's commandments. Their reward will be in accordance with their self-denial and sacrifice for the truth's sake.—[Ibid.](#), 194.

Appropriate Meeting Places

Those planning for the work did not know how the general public would respond to Ellen White's ministry. Working in close financial circumstances, they made what seemed to her to be inadequate provision for her meetings.

About this time Ellen White had a dream in which she seemed to overhear a conversation. The question was asked of a church worker, "How far would a light send its rays if it were placed under a bushel?"

"No farther than the compass of the bushel" was the answer.

"How far would it shine if put under a bed?"

“It would not illuminate the room,” replied the one addressed. “It would be too low and too obscure.”

“Then,” said the questioner, “place your light on a candlestick, and it will give light to all that are in the house. Your ideas need to be enlarged and elevated. The people have lost an opportunity to obtain light that God desired them to have.”

Commented Ellen White, “When the Lord sends His people help, they should show that they value it. Those who stand at the head of the work in these countries should be careful that they do not give it a narrow mold.”—[Ibid.](#), 200, 201.

Christiania, Norway

The last of the northern countries to be visited before it got too late in the season was Norway. It was Friday morning, October 30, when they reached Christiania (Oslo), and were taken to the home of A. B. Oyen, the minister sent from Battle Creek to Norway to engage in the translation of the Ellen G. White books. It was a bit of a relief to Ellen White to be residing in the home of English-speaking friends. Lest she be misunderstood, she hastened to record in her diary that “although we were welcomed and treated with every attention by our Danish and Swedish brethren and sisters, we felt all the time crippled because we could not converse together, and it was thus made impossible to do them all the good we much desired to do.”—[Manuscript 27, 1885](#). She described the activities on the Sabbath:

[323]

Sabbath was a pleasant day. I spoke to the people in the hall where the church met to worship, from [1 Peter 1:13-17](#). I had freedom in presenting to the people the importance of practical godliness. All listened with great attention. The hall was full. In the afternoon the ordinances were administered, and the washing of feet. In the evening a discourse was given by Elder Matteson.—[Ibid.](#)

The church had a membership of 120; two hundred attended the Sabbath morning service, and one hundred were present for the

ordinances Sabbath afternoon ([Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 207](#)).

Two full weeks, extending over three Sabbaths, were spent in Norway. Except for meeting a speaking appointment in Drammen, the entire time was devoted to the interests in Christiania, the principal city. Here a new publishing house was under construction, a sizable building that, as in Switzerland, would provide not only space for the publishing interests but a good meeting hall and living quarters for some of the workers as well. They were in a transition period; part of the building that had been occupied for the past six years had been demolished to make room for the new, depriving them of a meeting place. The Good Templars gave to the church the free use of their hall, seating three hundred, and the meetings were held here during Ellen White's visit. Printing work continued in that part of the old building still standing.

Large Public Meetings

Plans developed for her ministry to the general public that were broad and effective. The light would not be put under a "bushel" or under a "bed." A large hall belonging to the working man's society was hired for the Sunday morning meeting. Her diary tells the story:

[324]

Sunday forenoon [November 1] I spoke in a hall to a crowded assembly. It was estimated fourteen hundred were present. The text was [1 John 3:1-3](#). The Lord gave me much freedom and clearness in presenting the infinite love of God in giving His Son to die for the world.

Although the aisles were crowded and every seat filled, and even standing place occupied, large numbers were obliged to go away because they could obtain no entrance. The crowd held perfect attention to the close of the discourse. We hope this effort will not be in vain, but that through Christ's help much good may be the result.—[Manuscript 27, 1885](#).

Arrangements had been made for her to fill a speaking appointment on Tuesday evening, November 3, at Drammen, a city some

thirty miles from Christiania. Here there was a church of twenty members. The largest hall in the city, capable of seating seven hundred, had been secured. It had a gallery on each side and a huge stove at each end. Regarding the speaker's platform Ellen White wrote:

There was no pulpit nor place for one. Six beer tables, brought in from an adjoining room, served to make a platform. A square carpet was thrown over this platform, and another table set on top for lightstand and pulpit, while steps were made with chairs and stools. We doubt if the hall or beer tables were ever put to so good use before. The people came and filled the seats, the galleries, and all the standing room, and listened with the best of attention while I spoke to them of the love of Christ, and His life of sacrifice.—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 207.](#)

The train trip down had been made in heavy fog, but Wednesday morning it had lifted, disclosing, on the return trip, high bluffs, rocky mountains, lakes, and islands. There was a meeting in Christiania Wednesday evening; Thursday she spent in writing and in a visit with a building contractor by the name of Hansen, a prominent and influential member but rather liberal in his views. Ellen White described the visit as pleasant and profitable. They discussed health reform, and she related her experience in the rise and development of the work of the church. Friday evening a good meeting was held in the hall, with respectful attention given the speaker. [325]

Counsel on High Standards

Sabbath, of course, was an important day. Ellen White had been in Christiania a full week and had the feel of the overall situation. She noted in her diary concerning the thrust of her message:

I presented before them the great need of those who teach in word and in doctrine to take heed to themselves to be very circumspect in their course of action,

and in word and example seek to elevate the people to correct views and correct practices by their own habits and customs, and to be sure that in no way they belittle the requirements of God—especially the fourth commandment, which enjoins the observance of the Sabbath.—[Manuscript 27, 1885](#).

She dwelt on the point of the Sabbath. “It is God’s test,” she declared.

It is no man-made test. This is to be the separating line to distinguish the loyal and the true—him that serveth God from him that serveth Him not.—[Ibid.](#)

She was concerned that professed believers were sending their children to the public school on Sabbath. “They were not compelled to do this, but because the schools objected to taking in their children unless they should attend the six days in the week.”—[Ibid.](#) If they were unable to negotiate with the school authorities then, there was but one way—“to keep the Sabbath of the fourth commandment strictly,” which might call for Seventh-day Adventists to establish schools among themselves. Reporting further on her Sabbath morning sermon, she stated:

God is not pleased with His people in this place, for they have belittled His holy requirement, striving to bring His law into subjection to themselves, rather than bring themselves in subjection to His law.—[Ibid.](#)

[326] After speaking so plainly she invited those to come forward who felt they were sinners, not in harmony with God, and who needed His converting power. About fifty went forward. She then knelt before the pulpit and by request she prayed while Elder Matteson interpreted.

The Large Sunday Temperance Meeting

After spending most of Sunday, November 8, in writing, Ellen White met a five o’clock appointment in the soldiers’ military gymnasium, the largest hall in the city. The president of the temperance

society had extended the invitation to her to speak. As she entered the hall, she observed what she considered a special courtesy—“An American flag was placed as a canopy above the pulpit.”—*Ibid.*, 207. An audience of about 1,600 assembled, which she noted were of “the higher class of society” who had come to “hear the woman from America speak” (*Manuscript 27, 1885*). Among her listeners were the bishop of the state church and a number of the clergy. As the people listened with deep interest, she spoke for an hour and twenty minutes, presenting temperance in a manner they had not before heard.

I showed them that the Bible was full of history upon temperance. I showed them the part Christ had taken in temperance. It was all due to Christ that man was given a second trial after Adam’s fall. Christ redeemed Adam’s disgraceful failure and fall by withstanding every temptation of the wily foe. I mingled Christ in this temperance lecture from beginning to end.—*Ibid.*

Her lecture over, Dr. Nisson, the president of the society, profusely endorsed her presentation and introduced her to leading temperance men and women. They expressed their gratitude, and some declared that they had never listened to a temperance discourse like the one they had just heard. She was invited to address them again, but she declined, feeling that she must preserve her strength for her labors with the church during her last week there. “I feel,” she said, “that our people here need my help and I must do all for them that is in my power.” Revival meetings were held evenings through the week, and on some days she had interviews with members who sought her counsel.

W. C. White had not, up to this time, discussed with his mother the conviction that he should attend the 1885 General Conference session, called to convene in Battle Creek on November 18, lest it disturb her in her important work in Norway. But on Wednesday night, November 11, he broached the subject. At first she was startled and surprised, but as they talked it through, she concluded that this was the course he should follow. He could take to the General Conference a full firsthand report of the work in Europe

[327]

and its needs. At three o'clock Friday afternoon he took a ferry across the North Sea en route to Liverpool, where he could catch a steamship bound for New York. He planned to return in two months.

Ellen White's Last Weekend with the Christiania Church

Ellen White had now come to her closing labors with the Christiania church. It was a crucial time, for her pointed messages through the week had called for soul searching and reform.

Sabbath morning she took her place before the congregation and spoke very earnestly upon Joshua and the angel. Mr. Hansen, the building contractor who had been lax in his views of Sabbath observance, was with his wife in the audience. Ellen White reported:

I think the minds of many were impressed. I spoke plainly in regard to the Sabbath and its importance as a part of the message. The house was full. Brother Hansen left as soon as I had done speaking.—[Letter 35, 1885](#).

During the week she had written a sixteen-page testimony to the Christiania church. A. B. Oyen had already translated much of it. Sabbath afternoon he read to the church the portion translated. Ellen White's interest and concern is easily detected in her report to her son:

There was not time for many testimonies to be borne afterward. Brother Hansen made no response, but he sent word that he would be pleased to take me over the city on Sunday forenoon, and I responded that I would be pleased to go.

He showed me every attention and I managed to bring in again the vexed question of the Sabbath. He said he meant to get around to change his position just as soon as he could, and we had a very pleasant social time. He sat in the carriage where Sara generally sits. Annie sat beside him to interpret. He said if I would promise to come next spring he would make extra efforts to learn

to talk and to understand English. I told him I thought without doubt I would come.—[Ibid.](#)

Her last meeting in Christiania was held that Sunday afternoon at three o'clock in the Good Templars' hall, where she had met with the church Sabbaths and evenings.

As she closed the service she bade the people farewell and thought to slip away, while the congregation was singing, to the carriage she saw waiting for her:

But I was not to escape so easily. There was a rush for me and one and another took my hand, kissed it, and with tears running down their faces, told me how much good my message had done them. They held my hand so firmly and lovingly I could not withdraw it readily, while others were waiting to shake hands with me. The carriage was surrounded. We just had to wait, and then I was so sorry I had not waited in the house and shaken hands with every one of them....

This last meeting left a good feeling with nearly all, and I am inclined to think that all has been done that could be done on this visit.—[Ibid.](#)

At half past six the next morning—long before daylight—she left by train. A large number of the believers, including Brother and Sister Hansen, were there to see her off.

Return Trip to Switzerland

They took the southbound train, en route to Gothenburg, Sweden. When it became light, at about nine o'clock, she enjoyed what she termed "the romantic scenery." The trip on the ferry was tempestuous—six hours to Frederickshaven, Denmark ([Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 221](#)); then by train south to Germany and across Germany to Basel. They had to change trains and stayed overnight at Cologne (Koln), with little time for sightseeing. She noted in her diary:

[329]

Rode all day until seven o'clock, then the cars went no further and we stopped at Cologne. (Give description from guidebook.) We had the privilege of seeing the cathedral which had been many, many years in building. It had been finished only in recent years [1880].—[Manuscript 27, 1885](#).

The incidental reference to the “guidebook” gives a clue as to why at times in her letters and diaries written in Europe there are found quite full descriptions of the historic points, countryside, and cities visited. In making her record complete, she drew from these sources of information.

Back home in Basel she summed up some facts about the tour:

We reached Basel [Thursday] November 19, our homeward journey having occupied four days. We were absent six weeks on this Scandinavian tour, and traveled more than twenty-five hundred miles.... Wherever we went, our people warmly expressed their gratitude for the help which had been sent them and the interest manifested in their behalf by the brethren in America.—[Ibid., 225](#).

Ellen White was weary and worn and would have welcomed a few weeks' rest, but she found herself immediately involved in plans for another trip, this time to Italy.

Chapter 26—(1885-1886) In Italy and Switzerland [330]

There were some problems in Italy. Friday morning, November 20, 1885, just barely back home from her tour through the Scandinavian countries, Ellen White was approached by B. L. Whitney, president of the Central European Mission, with the suggestion that as soon as possible she accompany him to Torre Pellice to bolster the spirits of the few discouraged believers there. “Weary and worn from the arduous labors of our northern trip,” she wrote, “I would gladly have rested a few weeks in our home in Basel.”—*Ibid.*, 226. But arrangements were made to start out again the coming Thursday, less than a week after reaching home. She wrote of the proposed trip to Willie, attending the General Conference session in Battle Creek:

We are thinking of taking the whole family along; of going into Brother Bourdeau’s house and remaining a couple of months. We want the Lord to direct. It is cold as a barn here.... The very air seems as if I were breathing in air from a snowbank.—*Letter 36, 1885.*

But in the intervening days some things had to be done in Basel. First her living quarters needed to be made comfortable, regardless of the time when she would return from Italy. So Monday morning she directed her attention to that. She wrote:

Today I went down and selected one of those earthen stoves for my room, which is the parlor.... This stove is on the same principle as those white ones in Sweden, but this one we have purchased is about five feet high, brown earthenware. It is a beauty for \$20.... So you see we shall be nicely fixed here for the winter....

Brethren Whitney and Kellogg are true and earnest to do all they can for us. Brother Kellogg boards with us. They seem to think I must have everything I need to make me comfortable.

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But very little has been expended for furniture. Things picked up and borrowed have fitted us out with three good bedsteads and mattresses. Both rooms have carpets, not entirely covered, but answer all purposes.—
[Letter 37, 1885.](#)

She wondered how long she would be in Europe. Dependent on this was not only the minor matter of furnishings for her apartment on the third floor of the publishing house building, but longer-range questions as to literary help, working materials, et cetera. Should Marian Davis be brought over to assist in the work? She wrote to Willie:

If I were sure that we would go to America next May, I would not think it best to disappoint Marian's plans. I just want her to do the things that will be for her health and after-usefulness.... I dare not urge her to come to Europe. I will send matters to be published if I am able to write. I shall not write as diligently as I have done.

I certainly have never done as much work in the same amount of time as in the last four months and I am thankful to the Lord for this. How long it will be duty to stay here I cannot tell, but just as long as it seems to be duty to stay I will do this cheerfully.—[Ibid.](#)

The November weekend had been a very busy one. "Several not of our faith" were present at the Sabbath afternoon meeting. Among them were four students from the theological college who had read Adventist papers and had come to Whitney and to the employees of the publishing house with questions on the reasons for their faith. One of these was soon keeping the Sabbath and was employed to assist with the German work in the press ([Ibid.](#)).

[332] Plans were also laid for evangelistic meetings in Geneva, which called for Albert Vuilleumier and James Ertzenberger to assist. Then there were the preparations for the trip to Italy. Mary White would accompany her; Ellen's little granddaughter, Ella, would remain in Basel with Sara and Christine Dahl.

The Visit to Italy

Thursday morning, November 26, her fifty-eighth birthday, accompanied by Mary White and Whitney, Ellen White was on the train bound for Torre Pellice. She found it hard to realize that she was in Europe and had already labored in England, Switzerland, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, and now was on her way to Italy ([Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists](#), 226). Fortunately, the fog had disappeared and the sun was out in all its glory. Their journey took them through “wild and magnificent scenery.” As they skirted Lake Lucerne with its swans and flocks of half-tamed birds, she recognized that the terrain was “intimately associated with those historical traditions connected with William Tell, the so-called liberator of Switzerland from the Austrian yoke” ([Ibid.](#), 227). Her eyes feasted on the intricacies of the tunnels and bridges of the St. Gotthard pass, and as she traveled she informed herself of the building of the railroad that tunneled through the Alps. By midafternoon they were on the south side of the mountains; by ten o’clock, in Turin, Italy.

After a night in a comfortable hotel they were on their way to the Piedmont valleys and Torre Pellice, the terminus of the railroad. A. C. Bourdeau had just located there with his family. Ellen White stated that the purpose of the visit was to “encourage the little company there who are striving under great difficulties to obey God” ([Ibid.](#), 231). The believers were meeting opposition on the question of the seventh-day Sabbath by one who had a few months before accepted it but was now a bitter opponent. Ellen White presented the picture of the beginning of her work in Torre Pellice:

The next day, Sabbath, I spoke to the brethren and sisters in the hired hall in which they held their regular Sabbath meetings. Owing to a delay in getting out the appointment, few besides our own people were present. But I felt the same interest in speaking to the few that I would have felt in addressing hundreds. Choosing as my text [Isaiah 56:1-7](#), I tried to impress upon them the importance of obeying God and walking in the light, regardless of the opinions or course of the world.—[Ibid.](#)

[333] She pointed out that the question may arise in some minds as to why commandment keepers are separated from the world into little companies, and she answered, “It is not because we choose to differ from those around us, but because we see the necessity of obeying all the requirements of God.”—[Ibid.](#)

A Rude Interruption

Ellen White had a reason for choosing to speak as she did that Sabbath afternoon. Some months earlier J. P. Malan, who operated a printing business in Torre Pellice, had accepted the Sabbath truth and with his wife attended the European Council held in Basel in September. They entered interestedly in the meetings held there, but shortly after their return home, influenced by friends and business associates, Mr. Malan had turned rather violently against Seventh-day Adventists. The situation was an awkward one, for he published a newspaper in Torre Pellice and owned the hall in which the believers met.

The first clash after Ellen White’s arrival was in his refusal to print the notices of meetings at which she would speak. In her diary she described him as “an educated man” and his wife as an educated woman, able to “speak English and interpret or translate into German and French” ([Manuscript 29, 1885](#)). She wrote of the next confrontation:

Sabbath while I was speaking he came into the hall and began to take notes of what I was saying. While the Spirit of the Lord was upon me and I was speaking with great freedom and power, he jumped up and said he wished to speak and ask some questions. Should he lose his soul if he did not keep the Sabbath, or was it necessary for him to keep the Sabbath to be saved?—answer Yes or No.

I said, “This is an important question which could not be answered with Yes or No. Those who had clear light upon the binding claims of the law of God, and rejected that light and would not keep the Sabbath, would be judged according to the light given. Those who had

not the light to refuse and reject, but lived up to all the light God had given them, would not be made accountable for the light that they never had.”—*Ibid.*

The confrontation was unpleasant; Malan was excited, gesticulating frantically, almost raving. Bourdeau endeavored to give Ellen White a running translation of what he was saying. Malan allowed little room for answers to his challenges, and the congregation began to disperse as though afraid. She wrote in her diary, “We felt sad for Sister Malan. She begged me to excuse her husband. Poor woman, she is in a trying place.”—*Ibid.* [334]

After Sabbath the Adventists made another attempt to arrange for the printing of notices for the Sunday afternoon meeting, but Malan refused, and the meeting was poorly attended. While she was speaking, he appeared again, and there was a repetition of the Sabbath afternoon experience. She described the climax of the meeting:

We kept right on with our work as calmly as if an angry, half-frantic man was not acting before us as if possessed of the devil. He grasped his hat and flew out of the hall in a rage and gathered around himself several and talked to them like a madman. This was not a very encouraging beginning, but we will remain and see if the Lord has anything further for me to do.—*Ibid.*

Visit to Waldensian Hideouts

A secondary objective in the visit to Italy was to find a comfortable place where Ellen White could get some rest and relaxation. Her diary entries for three consecutive days open with the words “We are having a beautiful day“: “We have a most glorious morning“: and “It is a beautiful morning“: and of Monday, November 30, she notes that “the sun shines so warm and mild; the doors are open and it seems like spring.”—*Ibid.*

During the week she did some sightseeing, going by carriage to nearby points of special interest. When the carriage could go no farther, several times she climbed the hills to points of historic

interest relating to the experience of the Waldenses as they attempted to hide from their persecutors, and where many lost their lives.

[335] On Friday, December 4, she did some writing, corrected the transcription of her Sabbath discourse, and prepared for the meeting the next day. Arrangements had been made to print the notice of the meeting at Pinola, a nearby town. When a copy was posted, they found it matched the notice of a meeting to be held by Miles Grant, who apparently had followed her to Torre Pellice. Grant, an Advent Christian minister and editor of the *World's Crisis*, published in America, was a bitter foe of Seventh-day Adventists. He took pride in what he termed the exposing of the pretended visions of Ellen White. The notice of Grant's meeting carried the declaration that he would do this in Torre Pellice. Totally ignoring this, Ellen White went ahead with her weekend meetings Friday night, Sabbath, and Sunday. Attendance was disappointing; some said that two parties of Adventists had come to quarrel with one another and that the people ought not to go to the meetings of either party ([Letter 72, 1886](#)).

That Friday night Miles Grant spoke in a hall above the one in which Ellen White was holding her meetings. Although he mentioned Ellen White in his address, he reserved his stronger blasts until Saturday night. Of this she wrote in her diary:

In the evening Elder Grant presented his slander he had gathered up—what this disaffected one had said, and those who had been reprov'd for their wrongs and iniquity—and presented it to the people as condemning evidence that the visions of Mrs. White were not of God.

The very same course has Robert Ingersoll pursued against the Bible. Grant has taken some expressions that he could turn and misrepresent and distort. These he has made the most of, and the people who are ignorant of me and my work accept these garbled statements as truth. But as I am a stranger in Italy and unacquainted with the people and the people unacquainted with me and my work, it would be of no use to try to undeceive them.—[Manuscript 29, 1885](#).

Ellen White went right on with her meetings, making no reference to Grant, hoping to reach the hearts of those who would hear. But the outlook was bleak. In her diary she noted the position she took:

I might answer him and vindicate myself, but I will not even mention his name. I will keep right on seeking to speak the truth in love to those who will hear. I know I ought never to despair when engaged in the work for my Master.... I long to have the people see the truth as it is in Jesus, but all I can do is to pray and work the very best I can, having my will in submission to God's will and feel continually the work is the Lord's—the cause is His.... I am to do my duty. I am only an instrument in the hands of God, to do my part of the work in His love and fear.

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This truth will triumph, but when, where, and how is for the Lord to decide. These thoughts bring peace and trust and confidence to my soul. I will not be discouraged, for the Captain of our salvation stands at the helm.—*Ibid.*

Again through the next week, as the days turned colder, Ellen White pressed on with her writing. Accompanied by Mary, she continued to do some sightseeing also, guided by Bourdeau.

They were now in the very heart of the Waldensian hideouts. Ellen White's heart thrilled as she recounted in her mind the history of God's noble, persecuted witnesses. Some of the surroundings had a familiar look to her, for in visions she had been shown the travails and persecutions of the Waldenses.

While Ellen White stayed in the Bourdeau home in Torre Pellice, council meetings were held to give study to the best way to conduct the work in Italy. "We keep asking the Lord," she wrote, "to open the way for the truth to find access to hearts in these valleys." On the third Sabbath Bourdeau spoke, giving Ellen White a bit of a rest, but Sunday afternoon she addressed an attentive audience. Grant had left the valley, and tensions were lessening. She spoke again Sunday night, her last meeting there. Of this she wrote:

The Lord gave me His Spirit and at the close of the meeting nearly all present shook hands with me. One man understood English and said, “The Lord has been here tonight. You have spoken by the inspiration of His Spirit.” Several expressed an earnest wish for us to remain longer.—*Ibid.*

Tuesday, December 15, Ellen White’s visit to Italy came to its close. At half past four in the morning, she and her companions were at the depot to catch the train back to Turin.

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Back Home in Basel

The travelers returned to Basel by way of Geneva, spending a night and a day there in the Daniel Bourdeau home. The time was divided between sightseeing and writing a letter of some length to a young man “crazed on the subject of marriage” (*Manuscript 30, 1885*). This she left with Bourdeau to be translated. With additions, the material was worked into two articles for the *Review and Herald*—“Courtship and Marriage” (January 26, 1886), and “Unwise Marriages” (February 2, 1886). Years later, portions were published in *Messages to Young People* and *The Adventist Home*. A carbon copy of the articles was at the time given out for translation for the French *Signs*, published in Basel; it then would be sent to Christiania, for publishing there.

By the weekend Ellen White and Mary were home. Mrs. White spoke to the believers Sabbath morning in the meeting hall at the publishing house. A large mail was waiting for her, and she picked up her work with no overshadowing of urgent travel plans. She had now made the rounds of visits to the principal countries of Europe where the message was reaching out. If she was to remain in Europe, she hoped to make progress with her literary work.

Mary White was delighted to be back home with her little Ella, now nearly 4 years old. There was a heavy snow the day before Christmas. Ellen, perhaps with some allowable exaggeration, described the view of the large park in front of the publishing house as “the most beautiful picture I have ever seen in winter.” “Ella,” she said, “has a fine time trying to snowball her mother and grand-

mother,” but paid a price by way of a cold, thought to be from eating some of the snow ([Manuscript 30, 1885](#)).

As to her situation in general, Ellen wrote to Willie on December 22:

I can tell you, I find abundance of work that keeps coming ready to my hand and I see no place to rest, even in Europe. I think I will purchase me a horse and carriage and ride out daily. I do not take pleasure in the rides taken with a coachman and hackman. Well, I am certainly doing more work than at any other period of my life, and I am thankful that the Lord has given me strength to work....

I see our work has but just begun here; I see so much to be done and I am doing too much. I wish I could do the work of ten. I would gladly do it. But I can only do the work of one—poor, frail at that. May God work Himself.—[Letter 38, 1885](#).

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“In regard to writing in the future,” she commented, “I cannot say. I must write.” One important literary task that loomed before her was the enlargement of the first of the great controversy book, *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 1—the one dealing with most of the Old Testament history, a volume that was to become *Patriarchs and Prophets*. She wrote:

I think I can do it as well here in Europe as in America. Make just such arrangements as you please. If Marian is worn and has her plans arranged to stay, I can send writing there, but if you think it advisable for her to come, all right....

Referring to the work uppermost in her mind, she continued:

Tell her I have just one minute ago read the letters in which she has specified the improvements to be made in articles for volume 1. I thank her. Tell her that she has a point about Zedekiah’s having his eyes put out.

That needs to be more carefully worded. Also the rock, when the water flowed—something in reference to this. I think I can make the articles [chapters] specified more full, and as I am famous for moralizing, this will be no cross. Tell her to write to me, as I prize her letters as if she were my own child.... Tell Mary [Marian] to find me some histories of the Bible that would give me the order of events. I have nothing and can find nothing in the library here. It is getting dark and I am resolved not to use my eyes or brain by candlelight.—[Ibid.](#)

After signing her name, she added a postscript: “I cannot go through this. I have been interrupted so many times and I am too tired to correct my mistakes.”—[Ibid.](#)

Through the Early Months of 1886

[339] During the winter and spring months of 1886 Ellen White devoted her energies to her writing, with occasional weekend trips to visit nearby churches in Switzerland. In addition to her almost-constant letter writing, her first literary work was to carry out the resolution, passed during the closing days of the European Missionary Council, that called for the publication in English of a “report of the European missions, with the report of Sister White’s morning talks and a sketch of her visit to the missions” (see [Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists](#), 118). This would be for the information and encouragement of members in America.

W. C. White was editing the volume and gathering in the reports, which included Australia as well as Europe. But Ellen, with Mary’s help, had to edit and prepare the E. G. White addresses, and she needed to write out the story of her travels. In doing this, several reports written for the *Review and Herald*, but principally her diary, diligently kept for just such a purpose, were a great help.

Occasionally she spoke on the Sabbath in the hall at the publishing house. Inasmuch as she was working on the enlargement of *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 1, it is not surprising that on Sabbath, January 23, her topic was the rebellion of Lucifer. “I know the

Lord blessed me in bringing out the subject,” she wrote. “All were intensely interested. Sister Whitney took it down in shorthand.... We are in every discourse getting subject matter to be used.”—[Letter 94, 1886](#). The next Sabbath she spoke on Cain and Abel.

Marian Davis Joins the Force

When W. C. White, in early February, returned from the General Conference session held in Battle Creek, Michigan, he brought with him quite a company of workers. It included L. R. Conradi and his wife, and Marian Davis. Commented Ellen White when she got the word that they would soon be in Basel, “This settles the question that we shall remain in Europe during the best portion of the year 1886. We shall prepare books here and have them published here.”—[Letter 94, 1886](#).

When Willie arrived in Basel, he found his mother confined to her bed. For some days she had overtaxed herself and found she must lay her pen aside. Even so, she did not cease her work, but made good use of Sara McEnterfer, dictating to her. On Tuesday, February 16, she wrote of this to Addie Walling:

This morning I am so grateful to be able to do something on my writing. Marian and Mary [White] are now getting up a book of reports of travel and the morning talks, to be published. Sara makes a good reporter, so all the discourses have been reported and most of them are written out. I have several articles which we send at once to Eliza [Burnham] for the *Signs*.—[Letter 95, 1886](#).

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Three days later she added to the letter:

We are all busily at work. I have to write mostly by dictation, something I always declared I could not do, but I can, when I have to, do most anything.—[Ibid.](#)

A Horse and Carriage for Sister White

In a letter written in mid-February to Dr. John Kellogg, she makes mention of her plight:

I am in perplexity to know just what to do. My crippled ankles forbid my walking much. My hip also at times is quite troublesome. I have always been where I could have a team at my command to ride out. I have thought that I would purchase a horse and carriage so that I could be outdoors more, but a good horse would cost me \$200 and an ordinary carriage \$200 and \$300 for a good one. As I do not expect to stay here longer than this summer and fall, I hardly feel free to invest so much means when money is wanted so much in so many places.

It is against me that I cannot have more exercise in the open air. At Healdsburg I have my horses and comfortable carriage and have made it my practice to ride out every day at least two hours.—[Letter 32, 1886](#).

Within a month she had reached her decision and made the purchase, described in a letter to J. D. Rice in California:

I am now quite a cripple from the broken ankle. It was injured five years ago in Battle Creek. I cannot walk at times without a cane. I have had to purchase me a horse and carriage; cost something more than \$300 for the whole outfit. All deemed it necessary for me as they surely saw I could not get exercise by walking....

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I want you to tell your mother that the little feather bed she gave me goes everywhere I go and is a great comfort to me. My hip remains afflicted more severely now than for some time, but I am thankful that I am improving in health. I am cheerful and happy.—[Letter 18, 1886](#).

The days were growing warmer. Shortly after the horse and carriage were secured, they were put into use in a trip to Bienne for the Sabbath meetings, March 20. Accompanied by W. C. White, Mary, and B. L. Whitney, she made the trip Friday. There had not been time to give the appointment in the paper, but some in

Bienne got the word by letter and spread it around. She spoke Friday evening, Sabbath, and Sunday morning. Six churches were represented Sabbath morning, and the meeting room was crowded. In the social meeting held Sabbath afternoon, Ellen White reported that “the testimonies borne were excellent, right to the point.”—[Letter 96, 1886](#).

A Second Visit to Italy

Two weeks later, as spring came to Switzerland, Ellen White wrote to Dr. J. S. Gibbs, medical superintendent of the Rural Health Retreat in northern California:

It is now beautiful weather. The grass is a lovely green. Trees are leafing out, the birds are caroling their songs, and my heart is filled with gratitude to God. I will make melody to God in my heart.—[Letter 11, 1886](#).

It was a newsy letter, to a man she had aided in getting his medical education, and one to whom she was giving counsel in an affirmative and encouraging way. In it she spoke of plans being laid for the work in Europe:

We are now contemplating another journey to Italy. We should visit other churches; they are calling for us loudly. They call for us to again visit Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. These places demand much hard work and I dread it, but I may feel that I must go. Jesus lived not to please Himself. I do not know as we will get away from here this winter. May the Lord direct.—[Ibid.](#)

Ten days later, Thursday morning, April 15, Ellen White, accompanied by Sara, Willie, and Mary, boarded the train for Italy. On Friday they were in Torre Pellice again, at the home of A. C. Bourdeau ([Manuscript 62, 1886](#)). The reception of this visit was quite different from the one in December. [For Ellen White’s more detailed account of this visit to Italy, see her review and herald articles “visit to the vaudois valleys,” June 1, 1886. And “labors in the piedmont valleys,” June 29, 1886. For further details of her work in

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italy and this trip, see D. A. Delafield, Ellen G. White in europe, “the second visit to italy” and “the magnificence of the alps,” pp. 174-185.]

Routine Program in Basel

Six weeks intervened between their return to Basel and the time they had to be off for the second round of visits to the Scandinavian countries. These weeks were used by Ellen White in literary work and in weekend visits to nearby churches. The family now occupied five rooms on the third floor of the publishing house. On June 11 she described the house situation:

We now number ten. WCW and Mary and Ella are well. Ella has grown to be quite a girl since you last saw her. Sara McEnterfer is well, and just as busy as she can be taking letters by dictation and writing them out on the calligraph. Marian’s health is about as it usually is. She is at work on volume four, *Great Controversy*....

One week ago last Tuesday we returned home from visiting the churches in Switzerland. We traveled with our horse and carriage, and by thus doing obtained a view of the places and scenery of interest which we should not have done had we ridden on the cars.—[Manuscript 20, 1886.](#)

Traveling by carriage seemed to be the most effective means of bringing relaxation to Ellen White and was her recreation. In one letter she declared:

I have a good gentle horse, afraid of nothing. Four years old. I can drive him myself anywhere.—[Letter 97a, 1886.](#)

And this she did. On Thursday, May 20, with her son, Sara, and John Vuilleumier, she left Basel for a weekend visit to one of the churches. It was an unhurried trip and at the extended noonday stop for rest and refreshment near Laufen, she had an opportunity to write:

We are about fourteen miles from Basel, sitting upon the grass under a large, widespread oak, which is a shelter to us from the rays of a noonday sun in May in Switzerland. The horse, Dolly, is unharnessed. John Vuilleumier and Willie are at work rubbing him, using hay in the place of a curry comb; then he is left free to graze and do as he pleases.

John and W. C. White walk to the nearest house, which is not far distant, for milk to be used with our dry lunch. A bed has been made for me under the shelter of the friendly tree where I may lie down to rest. Sara McEnterfer prepares the luncheon, which is spread upon the grass upon smooth Manila paper used as a tablecloth. The prayer is made for the blessing upon our food, and the simple lunch is eaten with a relish.

W. C. White engages in writing letters on the Calligraph. Sara has arranged the dinner basket, washed the dishes in a stream of water close by, and EGW lies down hoping to sleep. She has been sick for several days and has not slept as many hours as health required. John Vuilleumier takes the German and French papers to the house where the milk was obtained, to do some missionary work and obtain names to whom he can send these little messengers of light and truth. Being refreshed with a short nap, I begin to use my pen.—[Manuscript 56, 1886](#).

With that pen she described the scenery, “beautiful and interesting.” Rugged mountains, with “battlements of rock ...on either side of the valley,” which she spoke of as “God’s great work of masonry.” She was intrigued with the many castles with their watchtowers. Then as Dolly was harnessed again, her musing and writing was cut short by the summons, “All aboard!”

The next day she continued her tribute to the grand scenery of Switzerland, drawing spiritual lessons from the things of nature. “We can never describe the scenery,” she exclaimed, “for it is indescribable. This view of Switzerland by carriage ride makes me desire to travel more by private conveyance.”—[Ibid.](#)

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Chapter 27—(1886) Second Trip Through Scandinavia

As Ellen White closed up her work in Norway in November, 1885, she had the feeling that before returning to America she should go on another tour of the Scandinavian countries. In conversation with Brother Hansen, the building contractor, she almost promised to be back in the spring. On her return from Italy she wrote to William and Jenny Ings in California, whom she was endeavoring to persuade to come to Europe and join her in the work, stating that “we design to start in two weeks for Sweden and Norway.” She thought she might end up in England, for she felt she had work to do there. She hoped the Ingses could join her in England and that they might unite their interests, “have a comfortable home, convenient food, and try to help one another” ([Letter 78, 1886](#)). In response to her invitation and urging, they closed up their work in California and started for Great Britain.

At Basel, Ellen White was scheduled to leave for Sweden on Tuesday, June 15, but Monday found her battling with an attack of pleurisy. She improved somewhat with treatment, but on Tuesday the pain returned. She wrote of the situation:

Every breath was painful. It seemed impossible for me to travel, especially at night. To take a sleeping car, for one night only, would involve an extra expense of ten or twelve dollars, and this was out of the question. Yet it was necessary for us to leave Basel that night in order to reach Orebro [Sweden] before the Sabbath.”—[The Review and Herald, October 5, 1886](#).

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In spite of forbidding circumstances, she determined to go. A few months before this she had stated, “I can, when I have to, do most anything.”—[Letter 95, 1886](#). She looked to the Lord, and He gave her help.

Relieved of the intense suffering, she, with Sara McEnterfer and Christine Dahl, took the train at 10:00 P.M. bound for Hamburg, Germany. There she was to meet W. C. White, who had gone on the day before in the interests of the publishing house. They met as planned; Christine, who had served as a translator, left them to return to her home in Norway, and Ellen White, with her son and Sara, proceeded to Sweden, arriving at Orebro on Friday morning at seven.

The Meetings in Sweden

Here the Swedish conference was to hold its annual session from Wednesday, June 23, to Monday, June 28, preceded by a week-long meeting for colporteurs and ministers. It was in the midst of this workers' meeting that Ellen White began her ministry on Sabbath, June 19, with an afternoon service in the commodious rented hall. Her address was followed by a social meeting, and the testimonies borne led her at the conference, and later in her diary, to declare:

We could but say, One Lord, one faith, one baptism.
The brethren in Sweden have the very same experience
as our brethren in America. This was a good meeting.—
[Manuscript 65, 1886.](#)

Following the rather dismal achievements of the literature ministry up to the time of the European Missionary Council in September, 1885, and encouraged at that meeting by Ellen White's message that colporteur work could succeed, J. G. Matteson had called a three-month colporteur institute in Stockholm, where thorough training was given. This had resulted in gratifying success for the colporteurs. The 1886 workers' institute at Orebro was a refresher course.

On the occasion of this visit a good hall that could seat three hundred was secured. Ellen White's meeting on Sunday afternoon was well advertised. When she came to the hall, she found it crowded, with many standing; she had to press her way through to the speaker's stand. A hundred were turned away for lack of room. She enjoyed freedom in speaking, and the crowd listened with excellent attention.

The workers' meeting would close on Wednesday. As she spoke at the morning devotional her topic was "Go Forward," and she stressed the need of broader plans:

What a work is before us! *Forward, brethren, forward*, and not one step backward! Bear in mind that you are being led by the Lord Jesus. There is a large amount of latent energy lying dormant. If you purify your souls by obeying the truth, you will be directed and led by the Lord Jesus. You will be properly directed, and you can be *laborers together with God*.... As you train your capabilities in faith your mind will unfold under the influence of the Holy Spirit's guidance.—[Ibid.](#)

The Conference Session

At the session of the Swedish Conference, which opened on Wednesday, about sixty-five church members were present from the ten churches. Twenty-three were delegates sent from nine of the churches, representing a combined membership of 250. Leading ministers present were J. G. Matteson, O. A. Olsen, and W. C. White.

Ellen White's meetings Sabbath and Sunday were well attended. She brought to the people practical instruction on true sanctification as contrasted to a spurious, no-cross experience in which perfection is claimed but is far from being attained. By the close of the general meeting she had spoken eleven times in ten days.

"I think that the work here is going well," she wrote to Mary, back in Basel, "and I have felt much better healthwise than for months in the past.... The brethren are much encouraged. It is a good meeting and everything moves harmoniously.... I tell you, things look much different than when we were here last fall. There is a good hall, good seats to accommodate the people, and if Jesus will work with our efforts, we will be encouraged indeed and He will be."—[Letter 38b, 1886.](#)

The Two Weeks in Christiania

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Christine Dahl and her mother, and N. Clausen, were at the depot

to meet Ellen White and Sara when they arrived in Christiania a little after ten on Friday morning, July 2. They were driven to the old publishing house building, where two rooms were comfortably fitted up for them with a kitchen. She was pleased that Brother Hansen, the prominent Adventist building contractor, called on her soon after her arrival. As the Sabbath drew on, she noted in her diary her pleasure that traveling connections worked out comfortably. Then she wrote:

I miss so much the strong arm of my husband to lean upon. He sleeps in Jesus. “Blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep.”—[Manuscript 66, 1886](#).

She was invited to take the Sabbath morning church service, held in the commodious chapel of the newly constructed publishing house. It was a room forty-one by fifty-five feet, with a twenty-two-foot ceiling. Most of the 175 Seventh-day Adventists in Norway were members of this church, the balance being divided between two much smaller congregations.—*SDA Yearbook*, 1887, p. 94.

Before leaving America, she had been shown the low standard of piety in the Christiania church, and since she had been there only eight months before, she was constrained to bear a positive testimony:

I spoke with great plainness and did not cut the corners of the truth to please anyone. I have been writing pointed testimonies for this church that is in a demoralized condition through several reasons—a neglect to keep the Sabbath properly, and a tolerating of meddlers.—[Manuscript 57, 1886](#).

She was pleased with the positive response in the testimonies borne by a number of the members.

At ten-thirty that night she and her party took a boat for Larvik, some one hundred miles to the south. Here E. G. Olsen had raised up a church of thirty members in an area troubled by fanaticism. Many living in that region held to a spurious holiness. A hall had been secured, and Ellen White spoke Sunday afternoon at four. Her diary carries a description of the meeting:

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At four o'clock we went to a hall and had a good audience. I designed to speak to the hearers words that would not in any way offend them, but the Lord gave me a message to the people in regard to the false theory of sanctification and I brought the law to bear as close upon them as they ever heard it.

I did not know what would be the result, for it was not in the style of Norway, but in true American style. It almost frightened Brother Edwin Olsen, for he said they had never had such talk as that before, but I had to give them the message the Lord gave me for them and I could not get away from the subject to any other. I presented before them the true Bible sanctification in contrast with the false, and the Lord gave me much freedom in doing this.

Brother Edwin Olsen came to the hotel and stated that the believers were very much pleased and benefited and that it was just what they needed.—[Ibid.](#)

Such experiences were a heavy drain on Ellen White's physical resources. Along with the weariness was the poisonous effect of the lead in the fresh paint in the rooms they were occupying. She was forced to take to her bed with a high fever.

Tuesday, Matteson and O. A. Olsen, who had been holding meetings in Copenhagen, returned to Christiania to prepare for the session of the Norwegian Conference to be held from Thursday through Tuesday, July 13.

At some point in the several days Ellen White was there she had had an opportunity to look over the publishing house, now comfortably located in the new building. When she was shown through the several departments, she expressed great joy over the thought that with the facilities thus provided, periodicals and books suitable for the field could be quickly printed and sent on their mission. When she reached the pressroom where the equipment was in operation, she took special interest and declared that she had seen that room and the presses years before—yes, it was nearly twelve years before, in the vision of January 3, 1875, in Battle Creek, Michigan ([Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 299](#)).

Dealing Carefully and Firmly with the Church Situation

But there was earnest soul-searching work ahead. On Wednesday she conferred with Olsen and Matteson concerning the condition of the church. It was clear that Matteson, who pastored it, had been somewhat lax in disciplinary lines. Among the members was a woman whom Ellen White described as having a tongue seemingly “set on fire of hell,” yet her antics had been tolerated and she was even a member of the church board. Ellen White, in her diary, recounted her conversation with Matteson and Olsen:

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They wanted me to bear my testimony. I told them it would do no good. My testimony was not received by those who wanted to do as they pleased, and they must do this work themselves, for God would say to them as to Joshua, “Neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you” ([Joshua 7:12](#)). This work has been neglected and the reputation of the truth greatly demerited by the very ones who claim to believe it.—[Manuscript 57, 1886](#).

Ellen White again addressed the church on Sabbath, July 10, reading from [John 5](#), a chapter she held as enlightening to those “who need to be reconverted before they can become righteous” ([Manuscript 66, 1886](#)). Sunday morning, after taking the six o’clock devotional meeting, she went into a meeting of the committee. She described it in a letter to her son Edson:

At nine o’clock, by appointment, I met with the committee to talk with them in regard to the way of observing the Sabbath, and the elements in the church that had been tolerated and had disfigured the work and brought the truth into disrepute. This influence, unless firmly dealt with, would be the means of turning many souls from the truth. I spoke very decidedly, in the fear of God, and I left no chance for misunderstanding, I assure you.

I pointed to the blacksmith’s shop, silent on the first day of the week, and the noise of hammering and of

the anvil and clatter of iron on the Sabbath; and then close by was the marble shop, and the sound of the hammer and chisel mingled with the prayers of a people who are professedly honoring God by observing His Sabbath. Entering into the ears of God is all this din and all this confusion, I said, dishonoring God on your very premises, under your control.

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The Lord has sent you a message to which you are to take heed. You may regard it as idle tales, but I tell you in the day of God you will know the things which I tell you are verity and truth.

I related to them that when in America I was shown the work in Norway, the church in Christiania in particular, and the slow advancement they were making. The standard of piety and of truth was very low. The truth was made a matter of convenience. Rather than bringing themselves up to the Bible standard, they were making their business and their own selfish interest the standard. God will accept no such service.

An angel of God said, “Look and observe carefully what this people are doing, mingling their own dross with pure truth.”—[Letter 113, 1886](#).

Sara was present to take down Ellen White’s words, and in her letter to Edson she promised to send a transcription so that he might have more exactly what she said. She continued her account to Edson:

Now, said I, I expect you may, some of you, consider my words as idle tales, but you must meet them in the judgment, and I must meet them. I cannot abate one iota from their severity.

The meeting for preaching was to commence in fifteen minutes, and I told them I wanted another meeting to express more fully upon some points the mind of the Spirit of God concerning them. Next Monday—tomorrow evening—I meet the church and address them all.

As soon as I ceased speaking, Brother Hansen arose and said, "I do not consider these as idle tales. I receive them, and believe the truth has been spoken to us this morning and I thank Sister White for saying them!" Then I think all in the room responded eagerly, heartily: "We receive these words and mean to act upon them."—[Ibid.](#)

These were tense moments, but Ellen White could do no other than present the word of the Lord to them. Her account to Edson reveals insights as to what it meant to be the messenger of the Lord:

Now Brother Hansen is the most influential man in the church and the only one who has much of any property. He is a large builder and has had men under him. He is a large contractor and I have talked with him plainly before in regard to his position and example, then I have seen him drawing off and feared he would give up the truth; but I felt so strongly for him I have written to him, close, earnest, and yet in love, pleading in Christ's stead for him to save his soul. He has had to have others read his letters for him, as he could not read English, but he has received these letters gladly and has ever treated me with the greatest respect, and I felt that I could fall down upon my knees and thank God for this token for good.

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I had reined myself up; every nerve strained to the utmost, and calmly and in the spirit of Jesus, but firmly and decidedly, as plucking a brand from the burning, I delivered this testimony. I am so thankful the Lord did open hearts to receive the reproof and warning. When I came to my room I was weak as a child. I knew not how they would take my message.—[Ibid.](#)

Sensing her state of mind and her weakness, W. C. White secured a carriage and took her for a drive into a nearby park. It rested and relaxed her. This was a critical time for the church in Norway. That evening, Sunday, Ellen White addressed the conference. "I had

much freedom,” she wrote. “The power of the Lord was upon me as I presented to the people the blessed heavenly home that awaits the faithful.”—[Manuscript 66, 1886](#). The next evening three backslidden and critical members were dropped from the church rolls. Always an unpleasant experience, it nevertheless had to be done if the church was to prosper. It took diligent labor on the part of both W. C. White and Ellen White to persuade Matteson, who had proposed resigning, to continue to carry the responsibility of leadership.

Ellen White continued her work to the close of the session on Tuesday evening, but spoke again to the church on Thursday evening before leaving the next day for Denmark:

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I presented before the church the necessity of a thorough change in their characters before God could acknowledge them as His children. I urged upon them the necessity of order in the church. They must have the mind which dwelt in Jesus in order to conduct themselves aright in the church of God. I urged upon them the importance of a correct observing of the Sabbath.... If it continues to go forward, then there will be a hearty repentance.... With this meeting my labors closed in Christiania.—[Ibid.](#)

She commented, “The work was but just begun in the church.”

The Week in Denmark

Because of headwinds the ship bearing Ellen White and her party did not reach Copenhagen until too late for a Sabbath meeting. But on Sunday afternoon the hall was well filled, and many stood as they listened with good attention to Ellen White. Her topic was “What Shall I Do to Be Saved?” Of the meeting she wrote:

If I had not felt the power of the Lord sustaining, I should have felt discouraged. But for the thought that this would be the sowing of the seed which would bring forth good fruit, I should not have had any hope that our labors were producing results. But I was sustained in bearing the straight testimony. I had the assurance

that Christ was by my side, inspiring my heart to utter the very message He gave me, and I was encouraged by Christ's presence. I felt a signal manifestation of His rich grace, and the interesting coincidences evidenced that the Lord Jesus was in the assembly.—[Manuscript 67, 1886](#).

At the Monday morning meeting twenty-four were present. It was a time of considerable unemployment in the city, and church members with work did not dare risk being away from their places of employment. She divided the week in Denmark between the rather poorly attended meetings, her writing, and some sightseeing. [A report of her visit to Copenhagen may be found in [The Review and Herald, October 26, 1886](#).] On Monday, July 26, with Sara McEnterfer and W. C. White, she hastened back to Basel. After spending about a month at home, she was off again to attend the Fourth European Missionary Council, to be held at Great Grimsby in England.

The European Missionary Council

Her traveling companions on the trip to England were Sara McEnterfer and L. Aufranc, from the publishing house at Basel. He was one of the delegates to the council. At Great Grimsby, Ellen White was pleased to meet Jenny Ings who had given up her position as matron of the Health Retreat in California to join and assist Ellen White. Her husband would engage in ministerial work, first in England and then on the continent. [353]

Although the business sessions of the council would not begin until Monday, September 27, tent meetings were being held in Great Grimsby, and Ellen White threw herself into the work, with two meetings on Sabbath, September 18, two meetings on Sunday, and early-morning talks to the workers Sunday and Tuesday.

The Sunday night meeting was well attended, with the tent full and half as many outside. She had an attentive audience and spoke with freedom ([Letter 23a, 1886](#)).

Many who came in during the week to attend the council were there for the Sabbath, September 25. Ellen White addressed them in

a poorly ventilated, small room at the mission headquarters at 5:30 A.M. The foul air almost paralyzed her. At the worship hour she spoke in the auditorium at the Mechanics' Institute Hall, about half a mile from the mission. This auditorium was located in the center of the building, with not a window to the outside, and near the close of her talk prostration from the impure air again overtook her. Of the experience she wrote:

I thought then I was cut off from doing anything for the people, but our brethren said they had found out a way that the room could be ventilated, so I put on the armor again and did very well until Sunday night. I spoke to a hall filled with outsiders. I knew the moment I attempted to speak that our brethren had forgotten to ventilate the hall, and the outdoor air had not been introduced into the hall after the last meeting had been held. I got through with the discourse wearied out.

I walked home. I could not sleep that night, and the next morning I looked haggard and felt two years older than I did before I made the attempt to speak. I became very sick with nervous prostration.... I was suffering much with inflammation of head, stomach, and lungs.—[Letter 114, 1886](#).

[354] Sara gave her most earnest hydrotherapy treatments, and she began to rally. But although she attended some of the meetings of the council, she did not speak again, either through the week of the council or the week following, while she remained at Great Grimsby. The thoughtlessness on the part of the workers had cut off much of her ministry; however, she did labor in personal interviews, writing, and giving counsel.

The Week-Long Council Meeting

The business of the Fourth Missionary Council was quite routine, with reports from the different fields of labor, resolutions aimed at improving the evangelistic thrust, the election of officers, and the choice of the location for the next annual council meeting. Norway

was selected. Ellen White's diary reveals a note of disappointment, and she observed revealingly:

How important are these councils where business is being transacted which shall reach into eternity. And earnestly should everyone seek God and make most earnest efforts to rid the soul of everything of a selfish character that love and union and harmony may characterize these meetings. None should watch to see if they cannot find an opportunity to dissent from their brethren's propositions.—[Manuscript 59, 1886](#).

Reporting to George Butler, she declared:

I tell you, these hard spots in my experience make me desire the climate of California, and the refuge of *home*. Have I any home? Where is it?—[Letter 114, 1886](#).

Not often would she allow herself to pen words of discouragement, but it is not difficult to read between the lines in this letter to one with whom she had worked closely through the years:

I have many things to communicate and would say, dear brother, that my trust is in the Lord. As the parties go to America I am strongly inclined to attend the General Conference, but know that if I get on the other side of the ocean it will be to stay, not to come back here. But there is a work to be done here yet, and there seems to be very much to be done to set the work rolling right, and I do not feel released yet.... When I recover I have some writing to do to different ones, which is not the most pleasant kind of work.—[Ibid.](#)

In this letter she told Butler, “Tonight I leave for Nimes to labor again.” [355]

Evangelistic Labor in Nimes, France

In London for a day or two en route to France, and with improving health, Ellen White wrote several letters for Whitney to carry with him as he traveled to the General Conference session to be held in Battle Creek commencing November 18. Then she and Sara, her son, and the Ingses were off for Nimes, France, where tent meetings were being held. Their journey took them through Paris, and they paused a day or two for sightseeing. Her diary entry for October 14, reads:

Paris, France. I arise at 5:00 A.M. and write several pages by the light of a candle before others are up. I seem to be transferred back to old times when candles were the only lights used except whale oil in lamps. We took breakfast at the restaurant. Then we walked out with Brother Garside to accompany us.—[Manuscript 70, 1886](#).

He guided them to the brokers' exchange and then to the Louvre, now a museum but formerly the palace of the kings. Next, Napoleon's tomb. "The marble tomb," she noted, "contained all that there is of this once-great man, before whom kingdoms trembled."—[Ibid.](#) After a simple lunch, Sara and Willie left by train for Basel. Ellen White, with William and Jenny Ings, took the train late in the evening for the all-night trip to Nimes. Their work there would open Sabbath morning.

D. T. Bourdeau had rented a home in Nimes. He pitched an evangelistic tent there and for a few weeks had worked with a reasonable degree of success. He encountered some opposition, and some rowdies had attempted to break up the meetings, but by the time Ellen White joined in the work, matters were quite stable. On Sabbath, October 16, Ings spoke at the early-morning meeting; his message on the restoration of the Sabbath was well received. Ellen White spoke in the worship service Sabbath morning and again in the evening. Sixteen people there were keeping the Sabbath ([Ibid.](#)). The meetings held through the two weeks Ellen White and the Ingses were there were evangelistic—for the church and the general public—with Ellen White taking the evening meetings in

the tent. She did some sightseeing in this large city, which had a history that predated the life and ministry of Christ on earth.

As this was an evangelistic series, Ellen White preached Christ-centered, soul-winning sermons. And from day to day she was able to do some more sightseeing, some shopping, and as ever, write, write, write—a hundred pages while in Nimes.

The Visit to the Watch Factory

Ellen White was having some trouble with her watch. On inquiry she learned that she probably could get one of the employees known to Patience Bourdeau, daughter of D. T. Bourdeau and wife, to make the needed repairs. This young man, Abel Bieder, had at one time stood with God's people in Switzerland but was now a backslider. Of the rather unique experience Ellen White wrote:

There was a young man who had become discouraged through the temptations of Satan and through some mistakes of our brethren who did not understand how to deal with the minds of the youth. He gave up the Sabbath and engaged to work in a manufacturing establishment to perfect his trade in watchmaking. He is a very promising young man. My watch needed repairing, which brought us together.

I was introduced to him and as soon as I looked upon his countenance, I knew that he was the one whom the Lord had presented before me in vision. The whole circumstance came distinctly before me.

He was connected with a little church in Switzerland, and among the believers had come in a spirit of criticism, or faultfinding, which was displeasing to God. When the youth made mistakes they were not treated with tenderness and love, but a censorious spirit was manifested toward them, and love and sympathy which [should] have been given to the erring was withheld, and the result was [that] three young men wandered away from God and from the truth. This young man of whom I speak is one of them.—[Letter 59, 1886](#).

[357] Arrangements were made for the two to have a little time together. She talked with him for two hours on the peril of his situation. She described the interview:

I told him I knew the history of his life and his errors (which were the simple errors of youthful indiscretion) which were not of a character that should have been treated with so great severity. I then entreated him with tears to turn square about, to leave the service of Satan and sin, for he had become a thorough backslider, and return like the prodigal to his Father's house, his Father's service. He was in a good business learning his trade; if he kept the Sabbath he would lose his position. As yet, while learning his trade, he had received only \$2 per week and his board, but in a few months more would finish his apprenticeship and then he would have a good trade. But I urged an immediate decision.

We prayed with him most earnestly, and I told him that I dared not have him cross the threshold of the door until he would, before God and the angels and those present, say, "I will from this day be a Christian." How my heart rejoiced when he said this.

He slept none that night. He said as soon as he made the promise he seemed to be in a new channel. His thoughts seemed purified, his purposes changed; and the responsibility that he had taken seemed so solemn that he could not sleep.—[Ibid.](#)

The next day this young man notified his employer that he could work for him no longer. Ellen White wanted him to go to Basel and join Conradi and Ertzenberger, learn more of the message, and prepare for colporteur work. He had no means, so the Ingses and Mrs. White made up a purse of \$9 for his ticket. To recoup their limited finances, they traveled third class as they continued their journey to Italy.

The travelers stopped at Valence, France, to meet with the few Sabbathkeepers who came together for two services. While at Valence they visited the cathedral and there saw a bust of Pope Pius

VI. “This is the pope,” Ellen White wrote, “specified in prophecy, which received the deadly wound.”—[Manuscript 70, 1886](#). She was intensely interested in the visit to the nearby tower where he had been confined and where he died.

The Third Visit to Italy

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Ellen White expected to spend two weeks in Italy, but when they got to Torre Pellice they soon discovered that a man named Corcorda was there attempting to neutralize the work A. C. Bourdeau had just done with the evangelistic tent; Corcorda got his ammunition from Miles Grant. With opposition coming early in Ellen White’s first visit to Italy and repeated now, it seemed impossible to accomplish much. But there was one bright spot during the days in Italy. She received a letter from Willie announcing the birth of his second daughter, Mabel. She was happy to welcome this second grandchild, born November 1.

She spoke in Torre Pellice on Sabbath and in Villar Pellice on Sunday. After remaining a few days, however, she saw that little could be accomplished. She and the Ingses turned their faces toward Basel, spending two weeks on their journey home, visiting churches in Lausanne and Bienne in Switzerland.

She reached Basel Tuesday, November 23. She had been gone for ten weeks. As she gave a report to Butler the next day, she wrote:

I have for weeks been exposed to fogs and rains and bad air in halls. I have talked in halls where it was sometimes very hot and the air was impure and then have gone out into a sharp, cutting air from the lakes, and taken cold again and again.... In two days, the twenty-sixth of this month, I shall be 59 years old. I thank my heavenly Father for the strength that He has given me to do more work than I ever expected to do. I thank the Lord with heart and soul and voice. I am thinking we may not feel obliged to remain here in Europe much longer.—[Letter 115, 1886](#).

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Chapter 28—(1887) Ellen White’s Last Year in Europe

Ellen White devoted the winter months in Basel to writing. On some weekends she went to various churches in Switzerland. Christmas Day, 1886, she met with the church in Tramelan. It was a very special occasion—the dedication of the first Seventh-day Adventist house of worship erected in Europe. (At each of the two larger centers, Basel and Christiania, was a sizable meeting hall in the respective publishing houses.) The little chapel at Tramelan was built by the Roth family at a cost of 3,300 francs, [Equivalent to \$660 in U.S. Currency in 1886.] and stood just back of the Roth home. Ellen White thought the building to be a little smaller than the first house of worship erected in Battle Creek in 1855, which was eighteen by twenty-four feet in size.

“Here is where the truth first started in Europe,” wrote Ellen White of Tramelan. “Here is where the first church of believers was raised up.”—[Letter 34, 1887](#). She had made the trip by train accompanied by William and Jenny Ings. Snow was heavy on the ground; one of the Roth boys was at the station with a sleigh, giving Ellen White the first sleigh ride she had had in years. The heavy snow, the evergreen trees bowed down with their white mantles, the ride in the sleigh, all reminded her of her girlhood in New England. Vuilleumier and Ertzenberger were at Tramelan for the occasion; Vuilleumier translated for Ellen White, and Ertzenberger spoke at the Sabbath morning worship hour. Visiting church members came in from Chaux-de-Fonds and Bienne.

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At the Sabbath afternoon dedication service Ellen White spoke about the Temple Solomon built, and the sacredness that should be observed in a building dedicated to the worship of God. She recalled earlier days of the message in America:

The first house built in Battle Creek was only about one third larger than this, and when we entered that

building we felt happy. The meetings heretofore had been held in a private house. We all felt poor, but we felt that we must have a place to dedicate to the Lord.... In two years it had to be given up for a larger one.... It was not long before the third had to be built, and then the present one which will seat three thousand persons....

We hope that the Lord will so bless your work that this house will prove too small for you. We expect to see other houses erected by our people and in this our faith will be revealed, for faith without works is dead. This house, so small as it is, is recorded in heaven. I can come to visit you with more courage now than heretofore because the people will see that you mean business.—[Manuscript 49, 1886](#).

On Sunday afternoon she met an appointment in the Baptist church in the city, speaking to two or three hundred townspeople. Then she hastened back to Basel and her writing.

She had promised in her dedicatory address that she would come back for more visits to the little church in Tramelan. She fulfilled this promise early in February. She filled appointments Sabbath, February 5, in the church. On Sunday afternoon, by special invitation of the pastor, she spoke again in the national Baptist church, giving a temperance address. Introduced by the pastor, she counted the meeting a success ([The Review and Herald, April 5, 1887](#)).

News of D. M. Canright's Final Defection

In March, Ellen White received word of D. M. Canright's final defection—and his request that his name be dropped from the church books in Otsego, Michigan. The action was taken by the church on the evening of February 17, at a meeting in which G. I. Butler, president of both the General Conference and the Michigan Conference, presided. In January Canright had taken the position that he would no longer be a Seventh-day Adventist and informed his longtime friend, Butler, of the decision. In the business meeting at which he was dismissed he made a clear-cut statement inscribed by the clerk in the records of the church. Canright made it plain

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that he had come to a point where he no longer believed that the Ten Commandments were binding upon Christians and had given up the law, the Sabbath, the messages, the sanctuary, our position upon [the] United States in prophecy, the testimonies, health reform, the ordinances of humility.

He also said that he did not believe the Papacy had changed the Sabbath. And though he did not directly state it, his language intimated that he would probably keep Sunday. He thinks that Seventh-day Adventists are too narrow in their ideas.—Church Clerk's Record, February 17, 1887, Otsego, Michigan, in Johnson, *I Was Canright's Secretary*, p. 82.

He recognized that his best friends were among the Adventists and promised he would never oppose them. Mrs. Canright joined him in the apostasy. The steps Canright took in separating himself from the church came as no surprise to Ellen White, for shortly before this she had an impressive dream. In it she saw Canright desiring to leave a strong vessel sailing in rough waters to take his chances on a vessel with worm-eaten timbers, destined for destruction. She described this view in a letter of warning to him, now found in *Testimonies*, volume 5, pages 571-573.

Within a few months he was preaching for the Baptists, and he soon became a very bitter enemy of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He continued to oppose Adventists until his death in 1919.

Writing Letters and Preparing Book Manuscript

Ellen White kept a record in her diary for much of February, March, and April, of letters written and of her work in book preparation. Picking somewhat at random, we find such notations as:

March 15—Have written seventeen pages notepaper.

March 18—Wrote several pages.

March 19—Wrote.

March 20—Wrote nineteen pages.

March 21—Twenty-five largest pages.

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March 22—Wrote twenty-five pages, large scratch-

book pages.... Wrote nine pages in regard to the condition of things [in the building]. Wrote sixteen pages for volume 1 [*Patriarchs and Prophets*].

March 23—fifteen large pages.

April 5 and 6—Wrote forty-eight pages; thirty pages of this was letter paper, eighteen note paper. Sent a long communication to be read to the Oakland April meeting. Sent letters to Elder Butler.

April 7—Wrote fourteen pages letter paper.

April 8—Wrote fifteen pages, volume 1.

April 9—Wrote fifteen pages letter paper, article for paper.—[Manuscript 29, 1887](#).

In a letter to Edson and Emma written April 18, we get a further glimpse of the work going on in Basel.

Marian [Davis] ...is deeply buried in volume 1. That work is nearly completed. I stopped my work on that to put additions into volume 4. I work early and constantly until dark, then retire early and generally rise between three and four. I see so much to be done to get things in order. I talk, I pray, I write, and then must leave it all with God....—[Letter 82, 1887](#).

She brought this letter to a close with a projection of plans for closing up her work in Europe:

We shall leave here for Prussia the twentieth of May, for conference meeting. After that we go to Norway, to attend the first camp meeting held in Europe, then attend conference in Stockholm, Sweden, then in Copenhagen, Denmark; from there to England. We cannot determine how long we shall stay there.—[Ibid.](#)

Visit to Zurich

But before leaving Switzerland, both Ellen White and her son wanted to squeeze in a visit to Zurich. Wrote W. C. White:

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For several days we have been thinking of making a short visit to Zurich. We have been reading the account of Zwingli's work, and before leaving we want to see his city. Mother is especially anxious to see Zurich, and we have some business matters to attend to also.—A-2 WCW, p. 225.

With anticipation of spending a day in the city where Zwingli labored and preached, Ellen White, accompanied by Willie and Mary, Marian Davis, and Wilbur Whitney, on Thursday morning, May 12, took the train for Zurich. On arrival they hastened to the cathedral and the nearby chapel in which Zwingli preached. In the courtyard was a statue of Zwingli with a Bible in one hand and a sword by his side. On reaching the site, Ellen White recognized the surroundings. According to teen-age Patience Bourdeau [later Sisco] as told by her to the author, Ellen White served as a guide to the group, pointing out features of interest and of how things appeared in Zwingli's day. As Ellen was engaged at the time in the enlargement of *The Great Controversy*, her comment "We gathered many items of interest which we will use" ([Manuscript 29, 1887](#)) is readily understood.

While the men were in the city on publishing house business Ellen White, Mary, and Marian continued sightseeing. Their tour included a ride in a rowboat on the placid Lake Zurich. They were back in Basel at nine-thirty that night.

Taking advantage of the weekend, she left Friday morning, May 13, with Whitney and his wife for Chaux-de-Fonds, where the little company of believers worshiped in a rather small room. Some of the believers had come in from Tramelan and Bienne, making an audience of sixty. So many were crowded together on Sabbath morning that they had no room to kneel for prayer.

When she learned that this growing church was buying a lot and hoped to build a house of worship, her heart was touched. Since she would be leaving Switzerland in less than two weeks, she pledged her horse, carriage, and harness to help build the church.

Starting on the Long Journey Home

The conference to be held at Vohwinkel, in Prussia, on the weekend of May 27 to 29, mentioned in her April letter to Edson, would be her first appointment en route to the United States. Mrs. Ings accompanied her on this first part of the journey. They said farewell to their friends and associates in the work in Basel on Thursday evening, the twenty-sixth, and took the nine-thirty train for Germany. One of the young men from the publishing house, who was returning to his home in Germany, accompanied them, assisting as translator. At Mainz they were met by L. R. Conradi, who traveled with them to Vohwinkel, a short distance north of Cologne. Arriving at three o'clock Friday afternoon, the elder of the church met them and drove them two miles into the country to visit a little community of Adventists. These had moved away from the cities to find freedom to work and worship as they chose.

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Meetings at Vohwinkel

Conradi spoke Friday evening; Ellen White was to speak at ten o'clock Sabbath morning. That Friday night, the Lord revealed to her in an interesting way the situation of those who would be in her audience in the morning. Her diary carries the account that she wrote on Sabbath morning:

Last night [May 27] I dreamed that a small company were assembled together to have a religious meeting. There was One who came in and seated Himself in a dark corner where He would attract little observation. There was not a spirit of freedom. The Spirit of the Lord was bound. Some remarks were made by the elder of the church, and he seemed to be trying to hurt someone.

I saw a sadness upon the countenance of the Stranger. It became apparent that there was not the love of Jesus in the hearts of those who claimed to believe the truth, and there was, as the sure result, an absence of the Spirit of Christ and a great want both in thoughts and feelings of love for God and for one another. The assembling together had not been refreshing to anyone.

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As the meeting was about to close, the Stranger arose and with a voice that was full of sorrow and of tears He told them that they had great want in their own souls, and in their own experience, of the love of Jesus which was present in large measure in every heart where Christ took up His abode. Every heart renewed by the Spirit of God would not only love God but love his brother, and if that brother made mistakes, if he erred, he must be dealt with after the gospel plan.—[Manuscript 32, 1887](#).

For ten or fifteen minutes the Stranger addressed those assembled, pointing to Christ as their example in conduct and labor and urging upon them the spirit of love and unity. He continued:

“That which distinguishes the character and conduct of Christians from all others is the principle of holy, Christlike love, which works in the heart with its purifying influence. The true Christian will work the works of Christ in giving expression in deeds of love one to another. With this living, abiding, working principle in life and in character, no one can resemble the world.”—[Ibid.](#)

The Speaker continued giving counsel to all, but especially the elders of the church. He urged, “‘Never draw apart, but press together, binding heart to heart.’” Having finished His remarks, He sat down. The sun, which had been hidden, beamed forth, shining full on the person of the Stranger. Turning to one another, the people in the audience exclaimed, “‘It is Jesus; It is Jesus!’”—[Ibid.](#)

“What a revelation!” Ellen White declared. “All knew in a moment who had been speaking to them.” And she described what she had seen in the vision of the results:

Then ...confessions of sin ...were made and confessions to one another. There was weeping, for the hearts seemed to be broken, and then there was rejoicing and the room was filled with the mellow light of heaven.

The musical voice of Jesus said, "Peace be with you."
And His peace was.—[Ibid.](#)

Little wonder that the theme of Ellen White's Sabbath morning discourse was "The prayer of Christ, that His disciples may be one as He was one with the Father."

Ellen White learned from Conradi, her translator, that those in her audience had never engaged in a social meeting. They had met together for prayer, but not to bear testimony. "We thought it a favorable time," she wrote, "to break them in, and our meeting was good, lasting three hours from its commencement." She was urged to speak again in the evening, and this she did, carrying the work forward, making special efforts to bring about harmony.

She spoke again Sunday afternoon, Conradi having occupied [366] the morning hour. She reported that there was "a healing of their difficulties" ([Ibid.](#)).

She was interested to learn that the Sabbathkeeping families were largely engaged in the textile industry, weaving various types of cloth. This was true also of the believers in nearby Gladbach, whom she visited on Monday. She spoke to them in a room in the Doerner home. The next day, with Jenny Ings and Conradi, she was on the way to Hamburg en route to Denmark. She was weary and weak, not having been able to eat for almost a week. She recognized that without the special help of the Lord she could not engage in such travel and ministry.

The Meetings in Copenhagen

In Copenhagen Wednesday afternoon, the travelers were taken to a comfortable hotel where they had a little time for rest before the annual conference meetings would open on Thursday, June 2.

She began her work that Friday morning with a short talk. Reviewing the progress made in Denmark in the two years she had been in Europe, she reminisced:

What a great change in Copenhagen since we first visited them! Our meetings were held in a little damp hall.... The Lord was present. He gave me a testimony

for hungry souls. Next our meeting was transferred to a basement. Above was a dancing hall and there were saloons all around us.... But the Lord gave me special messages for the people and blessed those assembled and blessed me in large measure. I spoke to them five times.

Nearly a year ago—July 17—I again visited Copenhagen in company with W. C. White and Sara McEnterfer. I spoke to the people about ten times. We had a hall—an improvement upon the one we had on our first visit the last of October, 1885. There had been special efforts made in Copenhagen by Elder Matteson and Brother Brorsen, and there were more than double the number [than] when we were on our first visit, and some of the best quality of people.

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And now, June 4 [1887], we see many more who have been added to the number of Sabbathkeepers, and our hearts were made glad to see a respectable, noble, intelligent class of believers assembled in the city of Copenhagen and to listen to their testimonies translated to me by Brother Olsen. We could indeed exclaim, “What hath God wrought!”—[Manuscript 33, 1887](#).

First European Camp Meeting at Moss, Norway

The next appointment was for Moss, Norway, to attend the first European camp meeting, to open Tuesday, June 14, and continue eight days. This was to be followed by the fifth session of the European Council. The people assembled in a beautiful pine grove. Tents were used for living quarters and for meetings—the first camp meeting held in Europe. A nearby house was rented for Ellen White and those who might be fearful of living in tents. She described the situation:

We are located in a house built on a rise of ground overlooking the water. The scenery is fine. Everything is comfortable for us and we expect to enjoy our stay here very much.... This is the first camp meeting that

has ever been held in Europe, and it has made quite a stir about here. We hope this meeting will make such an impression upon minds that we will be able to hold camp meetings after this, not only in Norway but in Sweden and Denmark. This will bring the truth more directly before a class of minds we could not reach by any ordinary means.—[Manuscript 34, 1887](#).

The pattern of meetings for such a conference had now been quite well established. Ellen White spoke Sabbath afternoon and again on Sunday afternoon on the ascension and second advent of Christ. Her audience filled the tent and crowded around it, for a good number from the community attended. The weather was good; on Monday, June 13, Ellen White wrote:

We can but pronounce this meeting a marked success. The news of it will be carried everywhere in these kingdoms—to Sweden, Norway, and Denmark—and will open the way for camp meetings in other places.

Many came to these meetings with great fear and trembling. They thought it must be at great risk to live in tents, but when they saw the arrangements—stoves in the tents if it should be cold and rainy—they had naught to fear. They were so charmed with the beautiful fragrant grove and the neat, comfortably furnished tents that they said if they had only known it was like this they would have prepared to occupy a tent themselves. The terror and dread of camp meeting is all removed and the way opened for camp meetings in these regions.—[Ibid.](#)

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Monday was taken up mostly with business meetings of the conference session. S. N. Haskell preached in the afternoon. Study was given to the tithing system, a point accepted rather belatedly by the believers in Norway. When those at the camp saw that this was the Bible plan ordained of God from the first, that He had a tithing church as far back as Abraham, and that it was God's plan that His children should return to Him the tithe and to give gifts, the matter was understood in a new light. A resolution to be faithful in these

matters was passed, with good support. On Tuesday morning, June 14, the Norwegian believers left for their homes and their businesses.

The Fifth Session of the European Council

Opening on the campground the same day, Tuesday, June 14, was the fifth session of the Annual European Council. Four delegates came from Central Europe, three from England, three from Norway, and one each from Denmark, Sweden, and Russia. They were favored in having four representatives from the United States—S. N. Haskell; J. H. Waggoner, who had come to assist in the work in Europe; and D. A. Robinson and C. L. Boyd, en route to Africa for mission service. In ten meetings the council gave special attention to the distribution of literature, and the production of literature that would fit the needs of the different countries. It was now clear that when the colporteurs were given proper training as Matteson had done in Sweden, literature evangelism could be very successful. It considered the opening of schools for the children of Adventist parents and also to the training necessary to prepare young men for ministerial work. On this latter point Ellen White wrote of the counsel she gave:

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I went into the council and was deeply interested. I had great freedom in speaking in regard to the possibility of doing a much larger work than we have hitherto done and I tried to set before our brethren how much greater work could have been done if our brethren had taken greater pains, even at large expense, to educate the licentiates before they were sent into the field for labor.

They were allowed to go and try their gift. They did not go with experienced workmen who could help them and educate them, but went out alone, and they did not all preserve close, studious habits. They did not grow, and were not taxing their powers to become able men in the Scriptures.—[Ibid.](#)

The result was discouragement for the young men, and it was difficult to hold them to the work of the church. One action taken by the council to correct this weakness, at least in part, read:

Whereas, The present truth is fast going to all nations of the earth, and the work is growing so as to call to it the attention of all classes; and, as we shall need to be prepared to defend the truth if the learning and wisdom of this world shall array itself against it; therefore—

Resolved, That we consider it highly expedient to encourage individuals to go to the best institutions of learning, that they may become acquainted with the theories of those who may oppose the truth, and to act as missionaries.—*SDA Yearbook*, 1888, pp. 75, 76.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Europe was coming of age.

On Friday, the families of D. A. Robinson and C. L. Boyd left Moss for London to continue their journey to South Africa. Ellen White participated in the meetings on Sabbath. As to Sunday morning, she wrote:

After taking our breakfast, Sister Ings and I walked out to the encampment. Found a retired spot and then spread out our fur and wrote an important letter of ten pages to the missionaries going to Africa.—[Manuscript 34, 1887](#).

The Council closed that day. The worker group traveled together to Christiania, and from there separated to their various posts of duty. [370]

The Well-Attended Meetings in Sweden

On Wednesday afternoon O. A. Olsen, the Ingses, and Ellen White took the train for Stockholm for the session of the Swedish Conference, which opened on Thursday, June 23. Sixty believers were present for the opening meeting at ten o'clock. They met in a tent, "the first tent that has been pitched in Sweden," noted

Ellen White. She added that as the meetings progress, “the people flock to the tent. It is to them a new and singular meetinghouse.”—[Manuscript 35, 1887](#).

Friday afternoon she spoke to a large audience.

At five o'clock I spoke to a tent crowded full. Every seat was occupied and a wall of people was about the tent. All were orderly and listened with apparent interest. Many found seats on the platform. Many were standing under the tent and around the tent. I had freedom in speaking to the people from [Titus 2:11-14](#).

.... I think I have not seen as an average, a more intelligent, noble-looking company than was before me, both men and women.—[Manuscript 35, 1887](#).

People crowded onto the grounds again on Sabbath, and she addressed an audience of four hundred on Christ's second coming. Detecting that before her were many who understood English, she held her voice in even tones and with distinct utterance. The meetings continued through Monday, with forty attending the farewell meeting Tuesday morning. “I remained after the meeting,” she wrote, “to bid all farewell. Shook hands with them and with the thought that we should never meet again until we meet around the throne of God.”

But there was “another little parting scene.”

All the colporteurs and workers assembled in the house of Brother Matteson and we had a formal parting meeting. Each one said a few words of their appreciation of the meetings. They had read the books of Sister White and wanted so much to see her, and as they had listened to her testimony they had accepted the message brought to them and had been greatly benefited and much blessed of the Lord. I responded in a short talk through Brother Matteson as my interpreter. We left Stockholm about 6:00 P.M. We were favored with the best of accommodations and slept quite well during the night.—[Ibid.](#)

On to the British Mission

Only one more stop was before Ellen White; then she would be free to take ship for America. While in Stockholm, she had hoped to hear from Willie about the tickets for the passage, and now she was on the way to England. To her surprise, she found him there. From Christiania he had gone to London in place of Basel, as she had expected.

The work of the church in England had grown slowly and the field still had the status of a mission, while on the continent it had attained the status of conferences. Ellen White's first appointment was for meetings Sabbath and Sunday at Kettering, some seventy or eighty miles north of London. She was there Thursday morning; although she found the weather excessively warm, she did some shopping with Mrs. Ings. The little church group worshiped in a good-sized hall, actually a building with metal sides and roof, which in the summer made it seem like an oven. Ellen White spoke there Sabbath morning and afternoon, and again Sunday afternoon. The Sunday meeting was attended by a good representation of the townspeople.

Ellen White would not be leaving on the *City of Rome* for the States for a full month, and she was grateful for this time to visit the churches and companies of believers in England. She had hoped to do this on her visit the previous year, but unfavorable weather made it seem imprudent. Now plans were quickly made for a few days in London, where she could do some writing and some trading, and then to Southampton for three days. She went to the Isle of Wight to visit the family of a sea captain who had made considerable sacrifice in accepting the third angel's message.

The records yield but meager information as to just how Ellen White spent much of the month. She devoted some days to work on *The Great Controversy* chapters. In mid-July she was at Wellingsborough, near Kettering, for two meetings. Ten days later she was at Grimsby, a hundred miles north, where she was able to get some much-needed rest before starting on her trip across the Atlantic. On July 20 she wrote from Grimsby to Willie and Mary in London:

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I am in good health, appetite good, strength good. We have the very best kind of living, and I am gaining my strength.—[Letter 90, 1887](#).

This was cheering news, considering that for more than a month she had been traveling from place to place by train and boat, carrying through meeting after meeting in weakness and with an upset stomach, and with very little food to sustain life.

The Illness of Mary K. White

W. C. could not return to the United States with his mother, for he still needed to attend to some unfinished business, but plans were laid for Mary and the little girls to go without delay. Mary's health was failing. The growing symptoms of tuberculosis were frightening. For much of two years she had been working diligently in the new publishing house in Basel, a newly constructed stone building that was not well heated. She needed urgently to get to Battle Creek and under Dr. Kellogg's care. She and the girls would return with Ellen White, leaving Liverpool on August 4. Marian Davis remained in Basel to complete certain work.

As the sailing was to be on Sabbath, Ellen White and her companions were allowed to embark and get settled on Friday. Actually quite a group of Adventists would be taking the ship. Some were ministers, bound for the General Conference session to be held in November, and some were young people—D. T. Bourdeau and his son Augustin, O. A. Olsen and son, and a Professor Kunz. Sara McEnterfer most likely occupied the cabin with Ellen White and Mary and the children.

Across the Atlantic on the City of Rome

On board the steamer *City of Rome* Ellen White Sabbath morning wrote a few letters, one to Jenny Ings. She wanted to tell her that she wished she were on board with them en route to America, but she didn't, for she knew Mrs. Ings was still needed in Europe. This is what she did write:

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All right this morning. Had a beautiful night. The

water as smooth as a placid lake. Would not think we were on the boat if we did not hear the machinery and feel a little motion. I shall miss you much. I became attached to you and shall feel the loss of your society. The weeks spent together have been very pleasant indeed....—[Letter 65, 1887](#).

The trip across the Atlantic took eight days and was reported as “pleasant and prosperous” ([The Review and Herald, August 16, 1887](#)). They encountered one storm, but Ellen White declared, “We had on the steamer a pleasant voyage.”—[Letter 50, 1887](#). She says little of how she occupied her time, but probably did a good bit of writing.

Thursday noon, August 11, the travelers landed in New York. The back-page *Review and Herald* note reported:

Mrs. E. G. White left immediately for New Bedford, Massachusetts, to attend the New England camp meeting now in session there, and Mrs. M. K. White came on to the [Battle Creek] Sanitarium, her health, we regret to say, being such as to render a stay awhile at that institution advisable.—August 16, 1887.

Before long, Ellen White wrote words of encouragement for the readers of the *Review* regarding the work in Europe. In her article published on December 6, after naming the countries where the work was advancing, she declared:

A good work has already been done in these countries. There are those who have received the truth, scattered as light bearers in almost every land....

Some connected with the work in these foreign fields, as in America, become disheartened, and, following the course of the unworthy spies, bring a discouraging report....

But we have no such report to bring. After a two years' stay in Europe, we see no more reason for discouragement in the state of the cause there than at its

rise in the different fields in America. There we saw the Lord testing the material to be used.... The word has gone forth to Europe, "Go forward." ...The greater the difficulties to be overcome, the greater will be the victory gained.

Chapter 29—(1887-1888) Back Home in America

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Ellen White's arrival back in the United States had been eagerly awaited. For two years she had been overseas, and the hearts of Seventh-day Adventists were made glad when they read the notice in the *Review and Herald* that she was back in the United States.

As early as July 12, the readers of the *Review* had been informed that Mrs. White might return to this country in time to attend some of the later camp meetings. The July 19 issue carried an announcement that the New England meeting had been advanced a week so they might be "favored with the presence and labors of Sister White, which can be secured at no other date."

As she entered on camp meeting work, she wrote to Mrs. Ings, still back in England, telling her that she was doing well, that her health was "never better," and that she was doing much work.

After the New England meeting in Massachusetts, she attended in rapid succession camp meetings in Ohio, Illinois, and New York. Then she had a week in Battle Creek before the opening of the workers' meeting that preceded the camp meeting at Grand Rapids. As usual, the Sabbath intervening (September 17) was a busy day for her, with the Tabernacle service in the morning and an address to the college students in the afternoon.

With Sara she went on to Grand Rapids to attend the Michigan camp meeting, which opened September 27. According to Uriah Smith's editorial report, two thousand people were camping on the grounds, in 350 family tents. The presence of Ellen White, W. C. White, and O. A. Olsen, just returned from Europe, added interest.

The preaching was free, and well received by the people. Sister White spoke fifteen times. There were about six thousand out to hear her on Sunday afternoon.—[The Review and Herald, October 11, 1887.](#)

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Ellen White was eager to press on to California and her home, to bury herself in the final work on the enlargement of *The Great*

Controversy and Patriarchs and Prophets. The camp meeting closed on Monday morning, October 3. Tuesday she spent in Battle Creek. In the evening, in response to the request of some of the prominent citizens of Battle Creek, she addressed a packed house in the Tabernacle on “Christian temperance as related to the home and to society.” The next day the *Battle Creek Journal* reported:

There was a good attendance, including a large number of our most prominent people, at the lecture of Mrs. Ellen G. White at the Tabernacle last evening.

This lady gave her audience a most eloquent discourse, which was listened to with marked interest and attention. Her talk was interspersed with instructive facts which she had gathered in her recent visit to foreign lands, and demonstrated that this gifted lady has, in addition to her many other rare qualifications, a great faculty for attentive, careful observation, and a remarkable memory of details. This, together with her fine delivery and her faculty of clothing her ideas in choice, beautiful, and appropriate language, made her lecture one of the best that has ever been delivered by any lady in our city. That she may soon favor our community with another address is the earnest wish of all who attended last evening; and should she do so, there will be a large attendance.—October 5, 1887 (in *Ibid.*, [October 11, 1887](#)).

On to Her California Home

The same page in the *Review* that carried the above report also informed the readers:

Sister White, W. C. White and family, and others, sufficient to make a party of fourteen, left Battle Creek on the midnight train, October 4, for California.—*Ibid.*

[376] Mary had been at the Battle Creek Sanitarium for two months; she was now on her way west with her family, bound for St. Helena and Ellen White’s cottage, Iliel, close to the Rural Health Retreat.

Ellen White would return to her Healdsburg home, not far from the college. But first she would attend two camp meetings, and then the General Conference session. She reached the West Coast while the Oakland camp meeting was in progress and joined in the work there. In November she attended a camp meeting in Los Angeles.

The General Conference Session of 1887

The twenty-sixth annual session of the General Conference was held in the Oakland church; it opened on Sunday morning, November 13. Ellen White, residing temporarily in the city, was present for many of the meetings. It was very much of a working conference, with the time divided between reports of the progress of the cause, meetings of the various auxiliary organizations, and the regular sessions of the General Conference. Butler presided. Ellen White wrote to Mary of the session:

We have had a good meeting from the beginning. We have representation of delegates that we are not ashamed of. They do credit to the cause of God west of the Rocky Mountains.—[Letter 51c, 1887](#).

A *General Conference Bulletin* covered the meeting, the first such report to be issued in connection with such meetings. It reveals that half of each day was given to regular session business; the other half related to the interests of the publishing work, the educational work, Sabbath school work, et cetera.

There were several discussions concerning a missionary boat for the South Pacific. The question of racial color line was introduced, but when it was found that the work of the church in the Southern States could be carried on discreetly without pressing this matter, it was dropped without official record or action. The Sunday law issue, now becoming prominent because of the Blair Sunday bill, [For many years Sunday legislation had been on the statute books of several states. Early in 1888, senator H. W. Blair, of New Hampshire, introduced into the United States Congress a bill that, if passed, would have enforced in all federal territories the observance of Sunday as a day of worship. An amendment to the constitution to that effect had

also been proposed. For several years national Sunday legislation threatened religious freedom in the United States.] was discussed. [377] Plans were laid for a mass move in securing signatures opposing such legislation by the Congress of the United States. The Foreign Mission Board was pulled together into a stronger organization, and W. C. White was continued as secretary. Careful study was given to the literature program of the church, both production and distribution, and a book committee was created to give guidance in the choice of materials to be processed in the church's publishing houses.

Dr. J. H. Kellogg was present; in addition to giving several addresses on various phases of the medical work, he spoke of the education of nurses. These interests found their way in the departmental meetings. Ellen White was quick to speak to some of the resolutions, urging broad plans. Financial matters called for attention, as did the transfer of laborers from one field to another. All of this was done against a backdrop of reports given each evening concerning the progress of the work of the church.

The last meeting took action recommending those who should receive ministerial credentials. Ellen White's name was among those voted to receive papers of the ordained ministers, although her ordination was not by the laying on of hands by men. The conference session closed on November 27.

The session over, Ellen White finally returned to her Healdsburg home. On December 8, W. C. White wrote to E. R. Palmer in Battle Creek of the situation of the two families:

Mother has gone to Healdsburg to spend the winter and my family are at St. Helena. Mary is not improving as we hoped she would. Our hope is that the Lord will arrest the disease.—A-2 WCW, p. 413.

The Winter in California

“I am planning to do a large work this winter,” wrote Ellen White to Haskell on December 8. She continued:

Marian Davis is still on volume 4 [*The Great Controversy*]. I hope it will be finished ere long and she go

back to volume 1 [*Patriarchs and Prophets*] again.—
[Letter 23, 1887.](#)

Getting settled in her Healdsburg home, a home she loved, with her literary helpers about her, Ellen White gave attention to facets of the program that would build for spiritual strength. Of this she wrote: [378]

I commenced in the arrangement of my family, to make the most perfect arrangement for religious things. We have prayers at half past six in the morning and precisely at seven in the evening, where all are expected to pray and nothing is to be allowed to interfere. If company comes, I tell them we have a special hour for prayer and if they choose to remain, they can do so.

We read a chapter in the Bible, sing a few verses, then everyone prays. Then we have a half-hour for singing again.—[Letter 23b, 1887.](#)

Ellen White might call for her favorite song, “Jesus, Lover of My Soul.” Other “family” members, knowing her preferences, which were often their own, would make suggestions; most may be found in *The Church Hymnal*, but some only in the older *Hymns and Tunes*:

“We Speak of the Realms of the Blest” “One More Day’s Work for Jesus” “I’m a Pilgrim and a Stranger” “I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say” “I Will Follow Thee, My Saviour” “There Were Ninety and Nine” “There Are Angels Hovering Round” “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross”

She enjoyed singing cheerful songs such as “There Is Sunlight on the Hilltop,” “Let Us Gather Up the Sunbeams,” and “Lord, in the Morning.” She might call for the hymn written by William Hyde after he heard her in 1845 tell of her first vision of the new earth—“We Have Heard From the Bright, the Holy Land”—DF 245g, Ella M. Robinson, in “Hymns Loved and Sung by Ellen White.” [Other E. G. White favorites were numbers 222, 617, 551, and 397, in *The Church Hymnal* (Review and Herald).]

[379] Except for an occasional visit to St. Helena to keep in close contact with the Retreat, which was having some problems, and to spend a little time with Mary, who was becoming weaker, Ellen White, through January, February, and the first two weeks of March, was in Healdsburg, pursuing her work on *Patriarchs and Prophets*. But pressures were mounting for her to visit various parts of the field: Nevada, Fresno, Lemoore, Los Angeles, and San Diego. She decided to attend the early camp meetings at Selma, near Fresno, and at Reno, Nevada.

At Fresno and Selma

On Friday, March 16, 1888, she was in Fresno for a few days. Writing of her visit, she said that the climate was mild; in this city of ten thousand there were about a hundred Adventists, meeting in a comfortable but much-too-small building.

As the Selma camp meeting closed on Monday morning, April 2, a comfortable carriage awaited her. Mr. and Mrs. Paddock were ready to drive her the thirty-five miles into the mountains to Burrough Valley, where they and several Adventist families lived. Ellen White wrote of her impressions:

We found Burrough Valley to be a delightful place, with a good climate. The scenery is beautiful and the valley is encompassed with hills, as was Jerusalem with mountains.—[The Review and Herald, July 3, 1888](#).

She was well impressed with the mild climate and with the fact that there were no strong winds. Thinking of Mary, she said, “I am exploring all the places in the valley, taking in its advantages and disadvantages.” The advantages outweighed, she thought, the disadvantages ([Letter 55a, 1888](#)).

Back in Fresno she and Mr. Church were called to the home of a church member and his wife, named Driver; soon an attorney was summoned. Of the visit, she reported:

Brother Driver ...was sick unto death. We found our brother suffering much bodily pain. His end was very near. We had a season of prayer for him, and committed

him to God, for his sufferings were almost over. His last work was to return to the Lord a portion of the substance He had entrusted to him as His steward. It was a solemn scene to see this man doing up his last work for time and eternity. The record of his life had been registered in the books of heaven.—[The Review and Herald, July 3, 1888.](#)

What Shall the Messenger of God Do?

[380]

Just what led Ellen White to write as she did in the *Review and Herald* of her work in Fresno is not clear, but the circumstances called from her a thought-provoking statement about her responsibilities as the messenger of the Lord.

The messengers, as the ambassadors of God, must bear a living testimony to rebuke sin, which will cut through the soul, whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear. There are many who close their eyes that they may not see, and their ears that they may not hear. They think that there has been a mistake made, that all these plain, pointed testimonies cannot come from God, but are from human agencies alone.

They wrap themselves up in their self-righteousness, and fight every inch of the way, that they may stand where they imagine they should stand—in defiance of the warnings of God's servants. They cling with desperate grasp to the garments of their own self-righteousness, lest they should be torn away from them.

But does not God know? Is there not knowledge with the Most High? Our God sees our hearts in a different light from that in which we see them. He is acquainted with our secret thoughts. He searches into the hidden recesses of our nature. He sends answers to our prayers, when we are filled with uneasiness and distress. He gives ear to our inward groanings, and reveals to us the plague spots in our characters, that we

may overcome defects, instead of being overcome by them.

Then she pointed out the crucial experience in accepting testimonies that call for changes in life and practice:

When unknown chapters in regard to ourselves are opened before us, the test and the trial come; and the question is, whether or not we will accept the reproof and the counsel of God. Will we cling to our own ideas and plans, and value ourselves more highly than we ought?

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God knows better than we do what is good for His children; and if they could see their real necessity as He does, they would say that the Lord had dealt most wisely with them. The ways of the Lord are obscure to him who desires to see things in a pleasing light to himself.

God can discern the end of His purposes from the beginning; but because the Lord's ways are not man's ways, they appear dark, severe, and painful to our human natures. But God's ways are ways of mercy, and their end is salvation and blessedness.—[Ibid., July 3, 1888.](#)

After portraying the purposes of God in sending such messages of counsel and reproof, Ellen White in this statement turns to the plight of the prophet:

What shall we do? Shall we bear the message God gives us, or shall we refrain, for fear of offending our brethren? As God's messengers, we cannot falter in the path of duty. Impelled by the Spirit of God, words are spoken, warnings and counsels are given. All unexpectedly the lips were opened, and there was no refraining from speaking the message of God. Reproofs were uttered that we would naturally shrink from giving. A zeal, prompted by the Spirit of God, led us to declare the dangers that threatened the children of God.

The servant of the Lord must pursue His work, losing sight of self, without thought of the consequences, exhorting to faithfulness, and urging to repentance. He must show the people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. The Lord has given the word; who can forbear to publish it? The love of Christ has a constraining power; who shall withstand its influence? It is the greatest evidence that God loves His people, that He sends them messages of warning.—*Ibid.*

Avoid Satan's Entangling Net

The paragraphs that follow this heart-searching statement give strong evidence that this depicted Ellen White's experience with the Fresno church. "This occasion in Fresno," she wrote, "was characterized by deep searching of heart. Many confessions were made, and yet the work was far from being thorough." Continuing to carry a heavy burden of heart, she stated:

If the Spirit of God is not cherished, and the light He sends is not appreciated, darkness will surely shut in about the soul. Parents and children need the counsel of Heaven. They need a deeper experience than they have ever had before. God's word warns them to shun the enemy's ground. They are not to be entangled in Satan's net, which he has set to catch the souls of men.—*Ibid.*

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She enumerates some of the snares:

Christians are not watchful. They yield to the baleful influences that surround them. They are led captive by Satan at his will.—*Ibid.*

The people of God, who have been blessed with great light in regard to the truth for this time, should not forget that they are to be waiting and watching for the coming of their Lord in the clouds of heaven.... Let no man set up his idols of gold, or silver, or lands, and give the service of his heart to this world, and to its interests.

There is a mania for speculating in land pervading both city and country. The old, safe, healthful paths of competence are losing their popularity. The idea of accumulating substantial means by the moderate gains of industry and frugality is an idea that is scorned by many as no longer suited to this progressive age.—[Ibid.](#), [July 10, 1888](#).

Another danger that threatens the church is individual independence. There is a manifest disregard of the prayer of Christ that His brethren should be one, as He and the Father were one. Let the church, to a man, feel its responsibility to preserve harmony of thought and action. Let every member seek to be in accord with the truth, and with the brethren.—[Ibid.](#)

Back to Her Work in the North

From Fresno, Ellen White returned to her Healdsburg home and her work on book manuscripts. On May 4 she was back at St. Helena. She was deeply pained as she saw Mary and thought of her self-sacrificing labor in the cold stone building in Switzerland where disease fixed itself on her. How Mary did appreciate having her husband with her in the little cottage near the Health Retreat, but he was often called away for important meetings. Wrote Ellen White:

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Stern duty calls him here and there, and although he bears a very sad heart as he sees Mary—who has been so unselfish, so forgetful of self—weak and an invalid, yet he tries to be cheerful and never speaks one word of repining. He talks with me, and weeps over things sometimes.—[Letter 75, 1888](#).

As Mary continued to lose ground physically, a decision was reached to take her to the warmer and more stable climate of Burrough Valley, where Ellen White had recently visited. With the help of Mrs. McOmer, Willie took Mary to the valley. The next day Ellen White, with Sara, left for her camp meeting appointment at

Reno, Nevada ([Letter 27, 1888](#)). It was her plan that after the Nevada camp meeting she, too, would go to Burrough Valley and spend a couple of months in writing. She stated:

I have had but little time to write since coming from Europe. It has been one succession of meetings that have called forth labor from me. I do want to rest, for I need it so much. The perplexities that we have had to meet in St. Helena, Fresno, and other places have taken all joy out of my heart, and I have thought perhaps this work would continue till we reach the end.—[Letter 27, 1888](#).

The camp meeting held in Reno, commencing May 24, was well attended.

Before it closed, a group picture was taken. Sara, in a postscript to an E. G. White letter, describes the experience: “The whole camp arrayed themselves before the large pavilion and had a picture taken.”—[Letter 27a, 1888](#). Surrounding Ellen White were Sara and the ministers who were present—McClure, L. A. Scott, Derrick, Loughborough, and Hickox, who carried the meeting through.

According to plans, following the Reno camp meeting, Ellen White went to Burrough Valley to take up her writing and to be near Mary.

Late July found Ellen White back in her Healdsburg home. Jenny Ings had recently come to join her staff and was at the moment working with May Walling canning peaches and plums from the White orchard. Marian Davis would be coming in a few days, and Ellen White wrote hopefully, “Shall be glad to get all together again and settle in to earnest work.”—[Letter 78, 1888](#).

The Angels Don’t Sing That Way

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One summer evening, while Ellen White was making a short visit to the Health Retreat, she spoke at the prayer meeting. She selected a certain hymn that fitted her subject. The hymn was announced. The congregation stood and in the warm evening began to sing listlessly. The music dragged monotonously. Then Ellen White held up her hand. “Stop!” she ordered. “Stop!”

I have heard the angels sing. They do not sing as you are singing tonight. They sing with reverence, with meaning. Their hearts are in their expressions of song. Now, let us try again and see if we can put our hearts into the singing of this song.

When they began again, the singing was with expression and with feeling, as if they really meant the words that came from their lips. [As told the author by A. P. Guyton, longtime painter at the sanitarium, who was present.]

August brought announcements of the General Conference session to be held in Minneapolis, to open on October 17. Ellen White would attend.

Before long, accompanied by Sara McEnterfer and her son, W. C. White, she was on the train, en route to Minneapolis.

Chapter 30—(1888) The Potential of the 1888 General Conference Session

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It was by faith,” wrote Ellen White, “I ventured to cross the Rocky Mountains for the purpose of attending the General Conference held in Minneapolis.”—[Manuscript 24, 1888](#). In some areas in California she had been meeting resistance to her special work of warning and nurturing the church. Little did she realize that such was but a foretaste of what was before her as Satan stealthily prepared to steal a march on the church at Minneapolis. “In the fear of God,” she wrote, “I had counseled, warned, entreated, and reproofed when under the influence of the Spirit of God, but the testimony had been unheeded.” Unbelief and resistance to reproof was becoming widespread.

“The brethren,” she declared, “did not seem to see beyond the instrument.” She continued:

I had been instructed in regard to many evils that had been coming in among us while I was in Europe, and had written what was the mind of the Lord in reference to them. I had also been told that the testimony God had given me would not be received, because the hearts of those who had been reproofed were not in such a state of humility that they could be corrected and receive reproof....

The evil one was determined to cut off the light which God had for His people, that every man might walk in his own light and follow his own judgment, and no voice be heard saying, “Why do ye so?” A strong, firm resistance was manifested by many against anything that should interfere with their own personal ideas, their own course of action. This laid upon me the heaviest burdens I could possibly bear.—[Manuscript 2, 1888](#).

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Overwhelmed with discouragement, she was overtaken by sickness at her home in Healdsburg. “I felt no desire to recover,” she later wrote. “I had no power even to pray, and no desire to live. Rest, only rest, was my desire, quiet and rest. As I lay for two weeks in nervous prostration, I had hope that no one would beseech the throne of grace in my behalf. When the crisis came, it was the impression that I would die. This was my thought. But it was not the will of my heavenly Father. My work was not yet done.”—*Ibid.* Then word came that those assembled in a week-long workers’ meeting just preceding the camp meeting in Oakland were earnestly pleading with God that she might be spared and that she might bear her testimony before those who would soon assemble there. “I tried to walk out by faith as I had done in the past,” she wrote (*Manuscript 21, 1888*). Her mind turned back seven years to that day when she sat by the bedside of her dying husband.

The solemn vows I there made to stand at my post of duty were deeply impressed upon my mind—vows to disappoint the enemy, to bear a constant, earnest appeal to my brethren.... I never can express with pen or voice the work that I discerned was laid out before me on that occasion when I was beside my dying husband. I have not lost the deep views of my work.... I have tried to fulfill my pledge.—*Ibid.*

This she now determined to do in response to the pleas from Oakland that she come to the campground. Of the experience she wrote: “To walk out by faith against all appearances was the very thing that the Lord required me to do.”—*Manuscript 2, 1888*. As she placed herself in the path of duty, the Lord gave her strength and grace to bear her testimony before the people. Day by day she found herself growing stronger.

October 2, the day the camp meeting closed, she, with a number of friends and fellow workers, and accompanied by Sara McEnterfer and Willie, was on the train bound for the East. To her disappointment, she found that in her reduced strength it was necessary to keep to her berth for most of the journey to Minneapolis. She could

pers” and clipped out some items for her scrapbooks. She noted that “Willie and the ministers have had their Bible readings and searchings on the law. I did not even listen, for I wanted rest of mind and body.”—[Letter 80, 1888](#).

The Matter of “The Law in Galatians”

The apostle Paul, in [Galatians 3](#), wrote of the “added law” in [verse 19](#), and of the “schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ,” that in [verse 24](#). Among Seventh-day Adventists for two years there had been controversy over which law he meant.

This was not a new subject of interest to Seventh-day Adventists. J. H. Waggoner, in his book *The Law of God: An Examination of the Testimony of Both Testaments*, published at the Review office in 1854, took the position that the “added law” of verse 19 and the “schoolmaster” of verse 24 was the moral and not the ceremonial law. He took the controversial stance that “not a single declaration” in Galatians “referred to the ceremonial or Levitical law” (page 24).

According to Uriah Smith, “Sister White ...had a vision in which this law question was shown her, and she immediately wrote J. H. Waggoner that his position on the law was wrong,” and the book was taken off the market (Uriah Smith to W. A. McCutchen, August 6, 1901). This settled the matter for a number of years. Then the question was raised as to whether the counsel given to Waggoner referred to the doctrinal positions in the book or to the matter of publishing conflicting views.

In the mid-1880s E. J. Waggoner (son of J. H.), associate editor of the *Signs of the Times* in Oakland and teacher of Bible at the Healdsburg College, was moved by an Ellen G. White address read at a camp meeting. He seemed to see Christ hanging on the cross as a sacrifice for his sins. He determined to delve into a study of this saving truth, a truth he felt he must make known to others (R. W. Schwarz, *Light Bearers to the Remnant*, p. 185). Records are meager, but the matter of the law in Galatians was discussed by a group of leading workers at the time of the General Conference session in Battle Creek in 1886 ([Selected Messages 3:167](#)).

“That conference [1886],” wrote Ellen White to G. I. Butler, “was presented to me in the night season.”—[Letter 21, 1888](#).

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My guide said, "Follow me, I have some things to show you." He led me where I was a spectator of the scenes that transpired at that meeting. I was shown the attitude of some of the ministers, yourself in particular, at that meeting, and I can say with you, my brother, it was a *terrible* conference. My guide then had many things to say which left an indelible impression upon my mind. His words were solemn and earnest....

He stretched out his arms toward Dr. Waggoner and to you, Elder Butler, and said in substance as follows: "Neither have all the light upon the law; neither position is perfect."—[Ibid.](#)

In another account of this experience she told of how, while in Europe, she was shown what took place in Battle Creek at the 1886 General Conference session:

Two years ago Jesus was grieved and bruised in the person of His saints. The rebuke of God is upon everything of the character of harshness, of disrespect, and the want of sympathetic love in brother toward brother. If this lack is seen in the men who are guardians of our conferences, guardians of our institutions, the sin is greater in them than in those who have not been entrusted with so large responsibilities.—[Manuscript 21, 1888.](#)

As controversy smoldered, articles in the *Signs of the Times* kept the issues alive. Ellen White made a fruitless search for what she had written earlier to J. H. Waggoner. Then on February 18, 1887, writing from Basel, Switzerland, she earnestly admonished E. J. Waggoner and A. T. Jones that the writers for the journals of the church should avoid coming before the public with divided or contradictory views:

We must keep before the world a united front. Satan will triumph to see differences among Seventh-day Adventists. *These questions [in regard to the law] are*

not vital points.... Twice I have been shown that everything of a character to cause our brethren to be diverted from the very points now essential for this time should be kept in the background.—[Letter 37, 1887](#). [See the full presentation in the chapter “on publishing conflicting views” in [Counsels to Writers and Editors, 75-82](#).] (Italics supplied.)

The angel guide, who in vision took Ellen White to the Tabernacle in Battle Creek at the time of the 1886 General Conference session, declared: [389]

“The Spirit of God has not had a controlling influence in this meeting. The spirit that controlled the Pharisees is coming in among this people, who have been greatly favored of God.”

Ellen White continued:

I was told that there was need of great spiritual revival among the men who bear responsibilities in the cause of God. There was not perfection in all points on either side of the question under discussion. We must search the Scriptures for evidences of truth.

“There are but few, even of those who claim to believe it, that comprehend the third angel’s message, and yet this is the message for this time. It is present truth.” ...

Said my guide, “There is much light yet to shine forth from the law of God and the gospel of righteousness. This message, understood in its true character, and proclaimed in the Spirit, will lighten the earth with its glory. The great decisive question is to be brought before all nations, tongues, and peoples. The closing work of the third angel’s message will be attended with a power that will send the rays of the Sun of Righteousness into all the highways and byways of life.”—[Manuscript 15, 1888](#) (see also A. V. Olson, *Thirteen Crisis Years*, p. 305.)

Thus, two years before the 1888 General Conference session, Ellen White was given a view of what was yet before the church in the matter of dealing with divisive issues. In the meantime, those who heard Waggoner on the subject of justification by faith found their hearts warmed.

Ellen White in Minneapolis in 1888

Arriving at Minneapolis Wednesday morning, October 10, at about ten o'clock, Ellen White, Willie, and Sara found that they were to be treated royally:

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We ...were pleasantly located in two good hired rooms, richly furnished with plush chairs and sofas. Willie's room was next to ours. But it did not look just in place to pile all our trunks and bundles in these nicely furnished rooms....

We decided to find other rooms, and we found rooms in the boardinghouse, hired for that purpose, and we have, Sara and I, one room, plainly furnished, but it has the blessing of a fireplace, which is of value, you well know, to me. Will has a chamber above with stove in his room. Two brethren sleep in a bed in the same room. Then they have a small room to do their writing in, and Willie is just as pleased with this as he can be.—[Letter 81, 1888](#).

The General Conference session was to be held in the newly constructed Minneapolis church, opening Wednesday evening, October 17. A ministerial institute was to precede the session by a full week. It was not till the date for the General Conference session was announced in the *Review and Herald* of August 7 that the plans for an institute had begun to develop. Butler wrote: "Leading brethren had suggested the holding of an institute to precede the General Conference the present year, and have presented many forcible reasons in its favor."—[The Review and Herald, August 28, 1888](#). A week later the *Review* announced the institute plans as definite. Butler added:

We cannot pretend to say what will be the exact order of exercises, or what subjects will be especially considered.... A week's time spent in instruction on important features of church and conference work, and in calmly considering and carefully studying perplexing questions relating to the Scriptures, as well as in seeking God earnestly for heavenly wisdom, will most likely be of vast benefit.—[Ibid., September 4, 1888](#)

It seems that W. C. White, one of the “leading brethren” who suggested the institute, had something more specific in mind.

There was the question of the law in Galatians, which had been introduced at the session in 1886, and also the identity of the ten horns, or kingdoms, of the beast of [Daniel 7](#). Views on these points, held by *Signs of the Times* editors E. J. Waggoner and A. T. Jones, were in conflict with the traditional views held quite generally, and particularly by Butler and Smith. White also had in mind the Sunday movement, duties of church officers, and the education of home and foreign laborers.

In his report of the opening of the institute Smith listed:

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The subjects proposed to be considered in the hours for Biblical and historical study are, so far, a historical view of the ten kingdoms, the divinity of Christ, the healing of the deadly wound, justification by faith, how far we should go in trying to use the wisdom of the serpent, and predestination. Other subjects will doubtless be introduced.—[The Review and Herald, October 16, 1888](#).

Concerning the first hours of the institute, he wrote:

At seven-thirty last evening Elder Haskell made stirring remarks upon the work of the message in foreign lands. At 9:00 A.M. today [the eleventh] a Bible reading was held by A. T. Jones, on the advancement of the work of the third angel's message. The point brought out was that personal consecration must lie at the foundation of all our success in this work.—[Ibid.](#)

The Institute Opens

In his editorial report written on the second day Smith informed the *Review* readers that about one hundred ministers were present when the institute opened at 2:30 P.M. Wednesday, October 10. As Butler was detained in Battle Creek because of illness, S. N. Haskell was selected to chair the meetings. F. E. Belden was chosen secretary. The daily program was a full one, beginning with a morning devotional meeting at seven-forty-five and continuing through the day and evening. Smith reported:

Sister White is present, in the enjoyment of a good degree of health and strength. Much disappointment and regret is expressed by the brethren that Elder Butler is unable to be present on account of sickness. He is remembered fervently in their prayers. The prospect is good for a profitable meeting.—*Ibid.*

As Ellen White spoke at the Thursday morning devotional she was surprised at the large number of new faces in her audience. Many new workers had joined the forces in the three or four years since she had attended a General Conference session held east of the Rocky Mountains.

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The meetings at 10:00 A.M. and 2:30 P.M. were occupied by Elder A. T. Jones in an examination of the subject of the ten kingdoms. At 4:00 P.M. Dr. E. J. Waggoner [both an ordained minister and physician], by arrangement, took up, in the form of a Bible reading, the duties of church officers....

This evening further instruction will be given on the subject of our missionary work.—*Ibid.*

In writing of the institute to Mary, at the Health Retreat, Ellen White reported:

Today, Friday [October 12], at nine o'clock, I read some important matter to the conference and then bore

a very plain testimony to our brethren. This had quite an effect upon them.

Elder Butler has sent me a long letter, a most curious production of accusations and charges against me, but these things do not move me. I believe it was my duty to come. I worry nothing about the future, but try to do my duty for today.—[Letter 81, 1888](#).

Butler had dictated a thirty-nine-page letter in which, among a number of other things, he attributed his five-month-long illness largely to the manner in which Ellen White had counseled in dealing with the question of the law in Galatians. She had not condemned Waggoner for his positions, although they were in direct conflict with those held by Butler and Smith.

That the president of the General Conference, who had stood loyally through the years in her support, was writing “accusations and charges” against her was disheartening. It reflected the widening tide of negative attitudes toward the messages God was sending through His messenger to His people. Butler was deeply suspicious of the work of Jones and Waggoner, and from reports that had come to him he felt certain Ellen White was in their camp. Thus the omens were beginning to appear of what was before them in the more than three weeks of the institute and the conference. To Mary she wrote:

Elders Smith and Butler are very loath to have anything said upon the law in Galatians, but I cannot see how it can be avoided. We must take the Bible as our standard and we must diligently search its pages for light and evidence of truth.—[Ibid.](#)

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The Friday evening service, October 12, cast a cloud over the worker group. Ellen White wrote of it:

At the commencement of the Sabbath Elder Farnsworth preached a most gloomy discourse telling of the great wickedness and corruption in our midst and dwelling upon the apostasies among us. There was no light, no good cheer, no spiritual encouragement in this

discourse. There was a general gloom diffused among the delegates to the conference.—[Ibid.](#)

She had the meeting Sabbath afternoon, and she used the opportunity to try to turn things around. She wrote:

Yesterday was a very important period in our meeting. Elder Smith preached in forenoon upon the signs of the times. It was, I think, a good discourse—timely. In the afternoon I spoke upon [1 John 3](#).

“Behold, what manner of love,” et cetera. The blessing of the Lord rested upon me and put words in my mouth and I had much freedom in trying to impress upon our brethren the importance of dwelling upon the love of God much more and letting gloomy pictures alone.

The effect on the people was most happy. Believers and unbelievers bore testimony that the Lord had blessed them in the word spoken and that from this time they would not look on the dark side and dwell upon the great power of Satan, but talk of the goodness and the love and compassion of Jesus, and praise God more.....

The Lord gave me testimony calculated to encourage. My own soul was blessed, and light seemed to spring up amid the darkness.—[Ibid.](#)

Writing on Sunday morning, she noted: “Today they have a Bible reading upon predestination or election. Tomorrow noon the law in Galatians is to be brought up and discussed.” She added this observation: “There is a good humble spirit among the delegates as far as we can learn. The letter written by Elder Butler was a good thing to open this question, so we are in for it.—[Ibid.](#)

And they were “in for it,” indeed.

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Unfortunately, the discussion on the ten kingdoms, whether the Huns or the Alemanni constituted one of the kingdoms, took on the form of a debate and dragged over a period of several days. Jones held for the Alemanni, and Smith stood for the Huns, as in his original list published in *Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation*.

Feelings ran high. Cutting speeches were made over a rather inconsequential matter. It polarized the group and laid the foundation for bitter debate of subjects to follow—particularly on the law in Galatians and on justification by faith.

Perhaps at this juncture we should pause for a description of the two younger men from the Pacific Coast who were leading out in innovative presentations. A. W. Spalding, who knew both, provides such a description:

Young Waggoner was not even like his father [J. H. Waggoner], tall and massive; he was short, stocky, somewhat diffident. Jones was a towering, angular man, with a loping gait and uncouth posturings and gestures. Waggoner was a product of the schools, with a leonine head well packed with learning, and with a silver tongue. Jones was largely self-taught, a convert found as a private in the United States Army, who had studied day and night to amass a great store of historical and Biblical knowledge. Not only was he naturally abrupt, but he cultivated singularity of speech and manner, early discovering that it was an asset with his audiences.

But these two caught the flame of the gospel together, and they went forth supplementing and reinforcing each other in their work of setting the church on fire.—*Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists*, vol. 2, p. 291.

Points Worthy of Note

For Seventh-day Adventists generally, the 1888 General Conference session in Minneapolis, and the ministerial institute that preceded it, brings to mind a matter of great importance—the message of righteousness by faith and the considerable resistance that met its presentation. Before the history of Ellen White's work at that crucial meeting is reviewed, certain points of background and developments should be considered:

1. Although as we look back, the subject of righteousness by faith is seen as one of great importance, it was but one of many [395]

pressing matters that called for attention of the delegates who met in Minneapolis for the twenty-seventh annual session of the General Conference and the ministerial institute that preceded it. "There was much business to be done," wrote Ellen White. "The work had enlarged. New missions had been opened and new churches organized."—[Manuscript 24, 1888](#) (see also [Selected Messages 3:166](#)). The routine business of the session, while vitally important, presented only a few features of unusual interest. Steps were taken to place in operation a missionary ship to serve the work of the church in the South Pacific; there was also consideration of measures to counter the Blair Sunday bill before the United States Congress.

2. The period of time the workers were together extended through four weeks, short two days. The eighteen-day-long session was preceded by a week-long ministerial institute called to give study to the responsibility of church officers, and certain theological and historical matters touching prophecy. The one session blended into the other.

3. The ministerial institute was well advanced before the subject of righteousness by faith was introduced, and the discussion of this important point continued at the Bible study hour during the early part of the session.

4. While the business of the conference, shown by the reports in the issues of the *General Conference Bulletin*, was broad and significant, the feelings and attitudes of those present were molded by the theological discussions.

5. Except for the references to situations found in the reports of nine of Ellen White's nearly twenty addresses, there is very little by way of a day-by-day record, for the practice had not yet been adopted of reporting all meetings. The editorial reports of the conference in the *Review and Herald* yield virtually nothing in the way of a record of the day-by-day activities.

6. Consequently, the information concerning just what took place at Minneapolis in the way of theological discussions has come largely from the E. G. White documents and the memory statements of a few who were present, as they looked back to the meeting.

[396] 7. As to establishing positions, no official action was taken in regard to the theological questions discussed. The uniform witness concerning the attitude toward the matter of righteousness by faith

was that there were mixed reactions. These were described succinctly by Jones in 1893: “I know that some there accepted it; others rejected it entirely.... Others tried to stand halfway between, and get it that way.”—[The General Conference Bulletin, 1893, 185](#). Ellen White and others corroborate this. It is not possible to establish, from the records available, the relative number in each of the three groups.

8. The concept that the General Conference, and thus the denomination, rejected the message of righteousness by faith in 1888 is without foundation and was not projected until forty years after the Minneapolis meeting, and thirteen years after Ellen White’s death. Contemporary records yield no suggestion of denominational rejection. There is no E. G. White statement anywhere that says this was so. The concept of such rejection has been put forward by individuals, none of whom were present at Minneapolis, and in the face of the witness of responsible men who were there. [These statements from A. T. Robinson, C. C. McCreynolds, and W. C. White appear as appendix D of A. V. Olson’s thirteen crisis years.]

9. The concept of denominational rejection, when projected, is set forth in the atmosphere of Ellen G. White statements made concerning the negative position of *certain individuals*—the “some” of Jones’s report, above. The historical record of the reception in the field following the session supports the concept that favorable attitudes were quite general.

10. Without depreciating the importance of the vital truth of righteousness by faith, and it is a vital truth, it would seem that disproportionate emphasis has come to be given to the experience of the Minneapolis General Conference session. J. N. Loughborough, who authored the first two works on denominational history, *Rise and Progress of the Seventh-day Adventists* (1892), and a revision and enlargement in 1905, *The Great Second Advent Movement*, makes no mention of the session or the issues. True, he was not there, but if the matter was prominent at the time he wrote, he could not have overlooked it. *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, published in 1915, makes no reference whatsoever to the General Conference session of 1888. Dr. M. Ellsworth Olsen, in his comprehensive work *Origin and Progress of Seventh-day Adventists*, published in 1925, devotes eight lines to a mention of the Minneapolis session.

11. Later writers of standard historical works deal with the matter: (1) A. W. Spalding, in *Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists*, (originally published as *Captains of the Host* by the Review and Herald in 1949), devoted a chapter to “The Issues of 1888”; (2) L. E. Froom, in *Movement of Destiny* (1971), goes quite into detail, devoting several chapters to the subject.

12. A careful review of contemporary documents reveals that while the issue of the doctrinal point of righteousness by faith was a prominent one in 1888, contention among leading ministers and negative attitudes toward Ellen White and the messages of the Spirit of Prophecy were vital points, as the great adversary attempted to steal a march on the church.

13. It has been suggested that the Minneapolis session marked a noticeable change in Ellen White’s teaching on the law and the gospel. While Minneapolis brought a new emphasis in bringing to the front “neglected truth,” the fact that there was no change in teaching is evidenced in the nineteen articles from her pen comprising the 122-page book *Faith and Works*, with six written before 1888 and thirteen written subsequent to the Minneapolis session.

14. The Minneapolis session and its problems did not become a topic to which Ellen White would often refer. It was one event among others in her life experience. She was not obsessed with the matter. She did occasionally refer to the loss to individuals and the church because of the attitudes of certain ones there. To Ellen White it was a matter of picking up and pressing on, not losing sight of the vital truths reemphasized at the session.

Chapter 31—(1888) Minneapolis and Its Diverse Fruits

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As we focus on Ellen White at the General Conference session of 1888 we will draw heavily from a retrospective statement she wrote within a few weeks of the meeting. There had been time for observation and reflection, and it was less difficult to put events in their proper perspective. Her manuscript of twenty-six pages bears the title “Looking Back at Minneapolis.”

“This was a season of refreshing to many souls,” she wrote near the opening of this review, “but it did not abide upon some.”—[Selected Messages 3:164](#). She declared later in the statement: “My burden during the meeting was to present Jesus and His love before my brethren, for I saw marked evidences that many had not the Spirit of Christ.”—[Manuscript 24, 1888](#) (see also [Ibid., 3:171](#)). She added: “My heart was pained to see the spirit that controlled some of our ministering brethren, and this spirit seemed to be contagious.”—[Ibid.](#)

Forty years earlier Ellen White had been present when doctrinal matters were studied by those who were pioneering the work of the church. As she wrote of this in 1892, she recalled:

We would come together burdened in soul, praying that we might be one in faith and doctrine; for we knew that Christ is not divided. One point at a time was made the subject of investigation. Solemnity characterized these counsels of investigation. The Scriptures were opened with a sense of awe. Often we fasted, that we might be better fitted to understand the truth.

After earnest prayer, if any point was not understood, it was discussed, and each one expressed his opinion freely; then we would again bow in prayer, and earnest supplications went up to heaven that God would help us to see eye to eye, that we might be one, as Christ and the Father are one....

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We sought most earnestly that the Scriptures should not be wrested to suit any man's opinions. *We tried to make our differences as slight as possible by not dwelling on points that were of minor importance*, upon which there were varying opinions. But the burden of every soul was to bring about a condition among the brethren which would answer the prayer of Christ that His disciples might be one as He and the Father are one.—[The Review and Herald, July 26, 1892](#). (Italics supplied. See also [Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 24, 25](#).)

But this was not the case at Minneapolis. Those there did not try to make their differences “as slight as possible.” For two years the issue of the law in Galatians had smoldered, and when it was taken up, bitterness and accusations were unleashed.

The focal point was verse 24 of chapter 3, which reads: “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.” There was no argument among Seventh-day Adventists concerning the believer's being justified by faith, although this vital truth was sadly neglected at the time. In 1888 the sharp difference of opinion, as when J. H. Waggoner wrote on the subject in 1854, was whether the law brought to view as the schoolmaster was the moral or the ceremonial law. Thus two issues were bound up in a study of “the law and the gospel” in such a way that if one topic suffered in bitter debate, both were affected. The great adversary took advantage of this.

To complicate matters, the discussion of the law in Galatians followed close on the heels of the bitter and extended debate over the Huns and the Alemanni, with key workers taking sides and reacting strongly.

The Law in Galatians at Last Introduced

On Monday, October 15, near the close of the institute, E. J. Waggoner introduced the subject of the law in Galatians. The discussion ran for almost a week at the Bible study periods in the General Conference session. Beginning with the second day, Waggoner

placed the emphasis on justification by faith. He was scholarly, gentle, and earnest, his arguments persuasive. On Monday, October 22, just one week after beginning his studies, he wrote a report of the progress of the institute and the General Conference session for the readers of the *Signs of the Times*. After writing of the subjects presented in the Bible study hour during the first few days, he reported that next taken up were “the law and the gospel in their various relations, coming under the general head of justification by faith.”

These subjects have aroused a deep interest in the minds of all present; and thus far during the conference, one hour a day has been devoted to a continuance of their study.—[The Signs of the Times, November 2, 1888](#).

His audience generally was in sympathy with the much-loved and respected Uriah Smith. Many stood with Butler, who was absent. Because Ellen White was tolerant and wished to see a fair discussion of the vital question of Christ and His righteousness, it was assumed she was influenced by Waggoner. This she denied, testifying:

I have had no conversation in regard to it with my son W. C. White, with Dr. Waggoner, or with Elder A. T. Jones.—[Manuscript 15, 1888](#) (see also A. V. Olson, *Thirteen Crisis Years*, pp. 304, 305).

All could see that she listened attentively to Waggoner’s expositions. In her retrospective statement, written soon after the conference, she declared:

When I stated before my brethren that I had heard for the first time the views of Elder E. J. Waggoner, some did not believe me. I stated that I had heard precious truths uttered that I could respond to with all my heart, for had not these great and glorious truths, the righteousness of Christ and the entire sacrifice made in behalf of man, been imprinted indelibly on my mind by the Spirit of God? Has not this subject been presented

in the testimonies again and again? When the Lord had given to my brethren the burden to proclaim this message, I felt inexpressively grateful to God, for I knew it was the message for this time.—[Manuscript 24, 1888](#) (see also [Selected Messages 3:172](#)).

[401] It is interesting to note that several times Ellen White declared that she was not ready to accept some points made by Dr. Waggoner. Of this she wrote on November 1, while the conference was nearing its close:

Some interpretations of Scripture given by Dr. Waggoner I do not regard as correct. But I believe him to be perfectly honest in his views, and I would respect his feelings and treat him as a Christian gentleman.... The fact that he honestly holds some views of Scripture differing from yours or mine is no reason why we should treat him as an offender, or as a dangerous man, and make him the subject of unjust criticism. We should not raise a voice of censure against him or his teachings unless we can present weighty reasons for so doing and show him that he is in error. No one should feel at liberty to give loose rein to the combative spirit....

It would be dangerous to denounce Dr. Waggoner's position as wholly erroneous. This would please the enemy. I see the beauty of truth in the presentation of the righteousness of Christ in relation to the law as the doctor has placed it before us.—[Manuscript 15, 1888](#) (see also Olson, *op. cit.*, p. 304).

Satan's Diverting Strategy

Here we see some of the fine points in the matter. In this statement she refers to the enemy; it is very clear that she considered what was taking place as a phase of the struggle between the forces of righteousness and the forces of the enemy. She had been forewarned: "I had presented before me in Europe chapters in the future experience of our people which are being fulfilled during this meeting. The reason given me was want of Bible piety and of the spirit

and mind of Christ. The enemy has been placing his mold on the work for years, for it certainly is not the divine mold.”—[Manuscript 21, 1888](#).

Now, as she wrote of the 1888 session, she was particularly concerned that Seventh-day Adventist workers be alert to the perils of the threatening Sunday law issue, and recognize the relative insignificance of the topics being debated. She drew the curtain aside:

Now, Satan had a council as to how he should keep pen and voice of Seventh-day Adventists silent. If he could only engage their attention and divert their powers in a direction to weaken and divide them his prospect would be fair.

[402]

Satan has done his work with some success. There has been variance of feelings, and division. There has been much jealousy and evil surmising. There have been many unsanctified speeches, hints, and remarks. The minds of the men who should be heart and soul at work, prepared to do mighty strokes for God, at this very time are absorbed in *matters of little* consequence. Because the ideas of some are not exactly in accordance with their own on every point of *doctrine involving minor ideas and theories which are not vital questions*, the great question of the nation’s religious liberty, now involving so much, is to many a matter of little consequence. Satan has been having things his own way.—[Manuscript 24, 1888](#) (see also [Ibid., 3:167](#)). (Italics supplied.)

As to the relative importance of the matter of the law in Galatians, Ellen White made several other statements:

Hours ...were spent [by her at night] in prayer in regard to the law in Galatians. *This was a mere mote*. Whichever way was in accordance with a “Thus saith the Lord,” my soul would say, Amen, and Amen.—[Ibid.](#) (see also [Ibid., 3:175](#)). (Italics supplied.)

The question at issue is *not a vital question* and should not be treated as such. The wonderful importance and magnitude of this subject has been exaggerated, and for this reason—through misconception and perverted ideas—we see the spirit that prevails at this meeting.—
Ibid. (Italics supplied.)

[403] Two points stand out in the statements she made at the conference: (1) the proper handling of truth will not lead to sharp divisions—its integrity can be judged by its peaceable fruits; (2) the fact that some error of minor consequence may be linked with vital truth does not cancel out the truth. Waggoner could be stressing vital truths and doing so in a telling way, and at the same time hold some views unacceptable on minor points. In her addresses she had little to say about righteousness by faith per se, but she emphasized the importance of tolerance and of unity among brethren, and the manifestation of a Christian attitude. She commented:

There are some differences of views on some subjects, but is this a reason for sharp, hard feelings? Shall envy and evil surmisings and imaginings, evil suspicion, hatred, and jealousies become enthroned in the heart? All these things are evil and only evil. Our help is in God alone. Let us spend much time in prayer and in searching the Scriptures with a right spirit, anxious to learn and willing to be corrected or undeceived on any point where we may be in error. If Jesus is in our midst and our hearts are melted into tenderness by His love we shall have one of the best conferences we have ever attended.—**Ibid.** (see also **Ibid.**, 3:166).

The Landmarks and the Pillars

Quite naturally reports of the happenings at Minneapolis were sent from day to day to Butler, bedridden in Battle Creek. What he heard did not give him peace of mind. He telegraphed a message to the session, “Stand by the old landmarks.” This stiffened the resistance to the Waggoner presentation. Shortly after the session, Ellen White was to address herself to the point:

In Minneapolis God gave precious gems of truth to His people in new settings. This light from heaven by some was rejected with all the stubbornness the Jews manifested in rejecting Christ, and there was much talk about standing by the old landmarks.

But there was evidence they knew not what the old landmarks were. There was evidence that there was reasoning from the Word that commended itself to the conscience; but the minds of men were fixed, sealed against the entrance of light, because they had decided it was a dangerous error removing the “old landmarks” when it was not moving a peg of the old landmarks, but they had perverted ideas of what constituted the old landmarks.—[Manuscript 13, 1889](#) (see also [Counsels to Writers and Editors, 30](#)).

Then she lists what she considered the “landmarks“:

The passing of the time in 1844 was a period of great events, opening to our astonished eyes the cleansing of the sanctuary transpiring in heaven, and having decided relation to God’s people upon the earth, [also] the first and second angels’ messages and the third, unfurling the banner on which was inscribed, “The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.” One of the landmarks under this message was the temple of God, seen by His truth-loving people in heaven, and the ark containing the law of God. The light of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment flashed its strong rays in the pathway of the transgressors of God’s law. The nonimmortality of the wicked is an old landmark. I can call to mind nothing more that can come under the head of the old landmarks. All this cry about changing the old landmarks is all imaginary.

[404]

Now at the present time God designs a new and fresh impetus shall be given to His work. Satan sees this, and he is determined it shall be hindered. He knows that if he can deceive the people who claim to believe

present truth, [and make them believe that] the work the Lord designs to do for His people is a removing of the old landmarks, something which they should, with most determined zeal, resist, then he exults over the deception he has led them to believe.—*Ibid.* (see also [Counsels to Writers and Editors](#), pp. 30, 31).

Ellen White's Objective

As the meeting advanced and the positions of the participants became clear Ellen White moved into the confrontation:

My burden during the meeting was to present Jesus and His love before my brethren, for I saw marked evidences that many had not the Spirit of Christ. My mind was kept in peace, stayed upon God, and I felt sad to see that a different spirit had come into the experience of our brother ministers, and that it was leavening the camp....

[405]

I was able to sleep but a few hours. I was writing all hours of the morning, frequently rising at 2:00 and at 3:00 A.M. and relieving my mind by writing upon the subjects that were presented before me. My heart was pained to see the spirit that controlled some of our ministering brethren, and this spirit seemed to be contagious. There was much talking done....

When I plainly stated my faith there were many who did not understand me and they reported that Sister White had changed; Sister White was influenced by her son W. C. White and by Elder A. T. Jones. Of course, such a statement coming from the lips of those who had known me for years, who had grown up with the third angel's message and had been honored by the confidence and faith of our people, must have influence. I became the subject of remarks and criticism, but no one of our brethren came to me and made inquiries or sought any explanation from me.

We tried most earnestly to have all our ministering brethren rooming in the house meet in an unoccupied room and unite our prayers together, but did not succeed in this but two or three times. They chose to go to their rooms and have their conversation and prayers by themselves. There did not seem to be any opportunity to break down the prejudice that was so firm and determined, no chance to remove the misunderstanding in regard to myself, my son, and E. J. Waggoner and A. T. Jones.—[Manuscript 24, 1888](#) (see also [Selected Messages 3:171-173](#)).

From morning to morning Ellen White met with the workers, at times reading what she had written during the early hours as the Spirit of the Lord had been leading her mind. Regarding an early-morning workers' meeting, she reported:

The remark was made, "If our views of Galatians are not correct, then we have not the third angel's message, and our position goes by the board; there is nothing to our faith."

I said, "Brethren, here is the very thing I have been telling you. This statement is not true. It is an extravagant, exaggerated statement. If it is made in the discussion of this question I shall feel it my duty to set this matter before all that are assembled, and whether they hear or forbear, tell them the statement is incorrect. The question at issue is not a vital question and should not be treated as such."—[Ibid.](#) (see also [Ibid., 3:174, 175](#)).

"Elder Waggoner," she reported, "had taken a straightforward course, not involving personalities, to thrust anyone or to ridicule anyone. He conducted the subject as a Christian gentleman should, in a kind and courteous manner."—[Ibid.](#)

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Ellen White felt she had done all that she could do in presenting the light the Lord had given her, and she thought to quietly withdraw from the conference ([Ibid.](#)). To do so would be in harmony with a predetermined course of action of which she wrote:

I have pledged myself by a solemn vow to God that wherever this spirit of contempt and unkindness and want of love should exist, I would lay it out in clear lines before my brethren, show them the sinfulness of their course, and with decided testimony turn the current if possible. If I could not succeed, then I would withdraw myself from the meetings, for I am afraid to be in such gatherings lest I shall be leavened with the prevailing spirit.—[Manuscript 21, 1888](#).

But she discovered that this was not God's plan. She was not to be released from her responsibility to be there as His messenger. She recounted the experience:

When I purposed to leave Minneapolis, the Angel of the Lord stood by me and said: "Not so: God has a work for you to do in this place. The people are acting over the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. I have placed you in your proper position, which those who are not in the light will not acknowledge; they will not heed your testimony; but I will be with you; My grace and power shall sustain you."

In solemn words the angel continued, opening up still further the true situation there at Minneapolis:

"It is not you they are despising, but the messengers and the message I sent to My people. They have shown contempt for the word of the Lord. Satan has blinded their eyes and perverted their judgment; and unless every soul shall repent of this their sin, this unsanctified independence that is doing insult to the Spirit of God, they will walk in darkness. I will remove the candlestick out of his place except they repent and be converted, that I should heal them.

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"They have obscured their spiritual eyesight. They would not that God should manifest His Spirit and His power, for they have a spirit of mockery and disgust at

My word. Lightness, trifling, jesting, and joking are daily practiced. They have not set their hearts to seek Me. They walk in the sparks of their own kindling, and unless they repent, they shall lie down in sorrow.

Thus saith the Lord, “Stand at your post of duty; for I am with thee, and will not leave thee nor forsake thee.”

These words from God I have not dared to disregard.—[Letter 2a, 1892](#).

A Heart-Searching Appeal

Not released, Ellen White remained. As she went before the workers in the early-morning meeting on Wednesday, October 24, she felt she must lay restraints aside and in the fear of God bear a bold message of reproof and rebuke. Writing of the experience, she declared, “Through the grace of Christ I experienced a divine compelling power to stand before my ministering brethren, in the name of the Lord, hoping and praying that the Lord would open the blind eyes. I was strengthened to say the words which my secretary took in shorthand.”—[Manuscript 24, 1888](#). What she said that Wednesday morning to the rather restricted group of ministers maybe read as the “Morning Talk,” now appearing in A. V. Olson’s *Thirteen Crisis Years*, pages 300-303. As she opened her address, she said in part:

Now our meeting is drawing to a close, and not one confession has been made; there has not been a single break so as to let the Spirit of God in.

Now I was saying what was the use of our assembling here together and for our ministering brethren to come in if they are here only to shut out the Spirit of God from the people? We did hope that there would be a turning to the Lord here. Perhaps you feel that you have all you want.

I have been awake since two o’clock and I have been praying, but I cannot see the work making the advancement that I wish I could. I have been talking

and pleading with you, but it does not seem to make any difference with you....

[408]

I never was more alarmed than at the present time. Now, I have been taken down through the first rebellion, and I saw the workings of Satan and I know something about this matter that God has opened before me, and should not I be alarmed?—[Manuscript 9, 1888](#) (see also Olson, *op. cit.*, p. 300).

Never before had she spoken so boldly to this group of responsible workers. She felt that souls and the future of the cause of God were at stake, for before her were the men who would be leading the church in the days to come. After speaking for some time, she closed her solemn remarks, stating:

This investigation must go forward. All the object I had was that the light should be gathered up, and let the Saviour come in.

I don't expect my testimony is pleasing, yet I shall bear it in God's fear. God knows there is a preparation going on here to fit these ministers for the work, and unless we are converted God does not want us.... These truths will stand just as long as time shall last. You want the eyesalve that you can see, and Jesus will help you if you will come to Him as little children. May God help us to seek Him with all our hearts.—matter that God has opened before me, and should not I be alarmed?—[Ibid.](#) (see also Olson, *op. cit.*, pp. 302, 303).

In the heart of this earnest appeal she made a statement that must have startled her hearers:

If the ministers will not receive the light, I want to give the people a chance; perhaps they may receive it. God did not raise me up to come across the plains to speak to you and you sit here to question His message and question whether Sister White is the same as she used to be in years gone by. I have in many things gone

way back and given you that which was given me in years past, because then you acknowledged Sister White was right. But somehow it has changed now, and Sister White is different. Just like the Jewish nation....

There is the danger God has shown me that there would be a deceitful handling of the Word of God. I have been shown that when debaters handle these truths, unless they have the Spirit of God, they handle them with their own efforts. They will, by making false theories and false statements, build up a structure that will not stand the test of God. This is what the Lord has shown me.—*Ibid.* (see also Olson, *op. cit.*, pp. 301,302).

The Conference Session Closes on the Upbeat

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From a letter written Sunday, November 4, to Mary White, a little glimpse is given of the closing days of the General Conference session of 1888. It was the last day of the meeting:

Our meeting is closed. I have on last Sabbath [November 3] given my last discourse. There seems to be considerable feeling in the congregation for the first time. I called them forward for prayers, although the church was densely packed. Quite a number came forward. The Lord gave me the spirit of supplication, and His blessing came upon me.

I did not go out to meeting this morning. This has been a most laborious meeting, for Willie and I have had to watch at every point lest there should be moves made, resolutions passed, that would prove detrimental to the future work. [One resolution that was urged would have restricted the theological teachings at battle creek college to only what had been taught in years past.]

I have spoken nearly twenty times with great freedom and *we believe that this meeting will result in great good. We know not the future, but we feel that Jesus stands at the helm and we shall not be shipwrecked. My courage and faith has been good and has not failed me,*

notwithstanding we have had the hardest and most incomprehensible tug of war we have ever had among our people. The matter cannot be explained by pen unless I should write many, many pages; so I had better not undertake the job.—[Letter 82, 1888](#). (Italics supplied.)

This she did shortly after the session closed, in the 26-page statement “Looking Back at Minneapolis” ([Manuscript 24, 1888](#)), a major portion of which appears in [Selected Messages 3:163-177](#). After reporting in her letter to Mary that O. A. Olsen had been elected president of the General Conference, and that S. N. Haskell was to serve until Olsen could move from Europe back to the United States, she continued:

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I cannot tell what the future may reveal, but we shall remain for about four weeks in Battle Creek and get out a testimony that should come out just now without delay. Then we can see how matters are moving at the great center of the work. We are determined to do all we can in the fear of God to help our people in this emergency.—[Letter 82, 1888](#).

By several expressions in this letter to Mary it is clear that when the meeting at Minneapolis broke up, the way lines would fall was not then seen but would be determined by what was in the hearts of individual ministers. This would not be known until there was a firming up and personal decisions made.

W. C. White’s Appraisal

On the Friday before the session was to close, W. C. White took time to write to Smith Sharp, a minister working in Topeka, Kansas:

We are just at the close of another General Conference, and in a few days, the delegates will be scattered to their respective fields, and another year’s work begun.

This has been a very interesting conference, and although not accompanied with all that peace and harmony that sometimes has been manifest, it is perhaps

as profitable a meeting as was ever held, for many important principles were made prominent, and some conclusions arrived at, that will be of great value, as they may influence our future work. Many go forth from this meeting determined to study the Bible as never before, and this will result in clearer preaching.

As you have no doubt noticed in the *Bulletin*, many advance steps have been taken as to our foreign missions, also some good moves for the advancement of the work in the South.—WCW to Smith Sharp, November 2, 1888.

In another letter, written a month later to O. A. Olsen, newly elected president of the General Conference, who was not present at Minneapolis, W. C. White described the interesting and somewhat baffling conference session:

In many respects this conference was a peculiar one. I suppose that many of your friends have written to you about it. There were some features of it that I could not understand, and some other features which I thought I could understand, that are not very pleasant to write about. Certain influences had been working for some time which culminated at this meeting in a manifestation of a spirit of pharisaism. So Mother named it.

[411]

The delegates at the close of the meeting carried away very different impressions. Many felt that it was one of the most profitable meetings that they ever attended; others, that it was the most unfortunate conference ever held. Some who left the meeting before it closed carried highly colored reports to Battle Creek and other places, of quite a discouraging character. Mother has met this spirit, and rebuked it at every turn, and there is quite a change in the aspect of matters in this State [Michigan].

Mother is now getting out *Testimony* No. 33, which I trust will let in considerable light. Yesterday was her sixty-first birthday, and although quite feeble when she

left California, she is now quite strong and is doing lots of work.—WCW to O. A. Olsen, November 29, 1888.

W. C. White Acting General Conference President

Shortly after the workers got back to Battle Creek, the newly elected General Conference Committee of seven turned to W. C. White with the request that he serve as acting president until Olsen could close up his work in Norway and move his family to Battle Creek. Olsen's term was for one year, and he reached the United States in time to serve out the last six months. The newly elected committee was made up of O. A. Olsen, S. N. Haskell, R. M. Kilgore, E. W. Farnsworth, Dan T. Jones, R. A. Underwood, and W. C. White.

Neither Butler nor Smith was returned to the committee each had served on for so many years. Butler, in broken health, retired in Florida, and Smith continued as editor of the *Review and Herald*. Within a few years both men saw the mistake they had made in regard to their attitude to the truths brought to the front at Minneapolis. Both made heartfelt confessions; both regained the confidence of Ellen White and of their brethren; both served the cause they loved so well.

Facing the somewhat new panel of leaders were challenging situations, with some uncertainties as to just what the future held.

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The Story that Contemporary Records Tell

In her statement "I cannot tell what the future may reveal," made on the day the conference session in Minneapolis closed, Ellen White suggests a question for which only time could supply the answer—"What would be the fruitage of the contest over the matter of the vital truth of righteousness by faith?" Two lines of documentation are available today in which we may seek the answer: One, more commonly available and perhaps the most dramatic, consists of the messages of counsel and reproof to those, largely in Battle Creek, who made up a hard core of resistance, and to several conference presidents. From this source, somewhat extensive in volume and

severe in its terminology, the impression of truth rejected is easily reached.

The other line of documentation, less bold in its impact but more representative of the overall situation, is found in (1) the records of meetings held in the churches; (2) the responses to the message; (3) steps taken by the General Conference Committee keeping Jones and Waggoner to the front as the leading Bible exponents in the church through the decade following Minneapolis; (4) a close scrutiny of *all* E. G. White statements touching on the matter; and (5) the testimony offered by those who gained great blessings at Minneapolis through the acceptance of the message. Of such there were not a few. One can assess somewhat the feel of favorable reaction represented by the testimony of one witness:

My father [W. S. Hyatt] frequently rehearsed to me the great spiritual revival that took place among the ministers at that meeting, and he personally shared in that revival. It has always been my understanding that while a few of the workers failed to accept and understand the principles of righteousness by faith at that time, yet the great majority of the workers accepted it and entered into a new experience. A number of them showed their sincerity by being rebaptized; among them was my father. I believe that that experience my father gained at Minneapolis followed him in his work through the rest of his lifetime.—DF 189, W. S. Hyatt statement, October 19, 1960.

Perhaps the true attitude of the church and its leaders toward Jones and Waggoner after the 1888 conference session is best reflected by the invitations extended to these two men to conduct Bible studies in the General Conference sessions held during the next ten years. It must be remembered that the General Conference Committee was responsible for planning General Conference sessions and choosing the speakers. The church organization had many able preachers. The choices made reveals the sentiments of church leaders. Here is the historical picture:

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In 1889 Jones took the eight o'clock daily Bible study and spoke on righteousness by faith. Waggoner also addressed the conference.

In 1891 seventeen Bible studies were recorded in the *General Conference Bulletin*. All but one of these were given by Waggoner.

In 1893 Jones gave twenty-four consecutive Bible studies, which were published in the *General Conference Bulletin*.

In 1895 twenty-six consecutive studies by Jones were recorded.

In 1897 nineteen Bible studies were given by Waggoner and eleven by Jones. One man spoke on consecutive mornings, the other on consecutive afternoons. A large part of the *Bulletin* is made up of the reports of their thirty studies.

In 1899 Waggoner gave three studies and Jones seven.

It is clear that the rank and file of workers and laity alike respected and appreciated the men through whom light came at Minneapolis, and benefited from their earnest ministry of the Word. It is clear also that unprecedented opportunity was given for the presentation of whatever messages burdened their hearts.

In 1897 Jones was elected editor of the *Review and Herald*, a position he held for four years. During this time, Smith took a second place on the editorial staff.

Righteousness by Faith Defined

In answer to the question as to why, with the message of righteousness by faith being so important, did not Ellen White devote a book to the subject, it might be said that while it is the basis of salvation, it is a very simple matter and one that springs out here and there all through her articles and books. [Three well-balanced compilations of E. G. White materials set forth the precious truth of righteousness by faith as taught in her writings: *Christ Our Righteousness*, Compiled by A. G. Daniells and published in 1928; and two compilations issued by the Ellen G. White Estate, a fifty-page section, "Christ Our Righteousness," in *Selected Messages*, Book 1, published in 1958, and the 122-page *Faith and Works*, published in 1979.] She summed it up in a testimony written May 1, 1895, addressed to the Battle Creek church:

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The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to his people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. His message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure....

The efficacy of the blood of Christ was to be presented to the people with freshness and power, that their faith might lay hold upon its merits....

Unless he makes it his life business to behold the uplifted Saviour, and by faith to accept the merits which it is his privilege to claim, the sinner can no more be saved than Peter could walk upon the water unless he kept his eyes fixed steadily upon Jesus.

Now it has been Satan's determined purpose to eclipse the view of Jesus, and lead men to look to man, and trust to man, and be educated to expect help from man. For years the church has been looking to man, and expecting much from man, but not looking to Jesus, in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered. Therefore God gave to His servants a testimony that presented the truth as it is in Jesus, which is the third angel's message, in clear, distinct lines.—[Letter 57, 1895](#) (see also [Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 91-93](#)).

A Personal and Frail Experience

[415] The key phrase in the above quotation is “Unless he makes it his life business to behold the uplifted Saviour.” First, it is a personal matter; only by individually beholding Jesus and laying claim upon the promised merits of a risen Saviour can the experience be enjoyed. Second, the experience is one that must be renewed daily and maintained by *keeping* the eyes on Jesus. It can be had and enjoyed today, and lost tomorrow. A. W. Spalding put it well as he wrote of the 1888 experience:

Justification by faith, the foundation truth of salvation through Christ, is the most difficult of all truths to keep in the experience of the Christian. It is easy of profession, but elusive in application.—*Origin and History*, vol. 2, p. 281.

Ellen White, in one way or another, reminded those who listened to her discourses, and who read her books and articles, of the vital place this experience held in character building, in daily victorious living, and in salvation. As noted, the Minneapolis experience did not become a fetish with her. In fact, the experience of living the life of righteousness by faith may be had with no reference to or knowledge of the struggle at Minneapolis in 1888, with its animosities and bitterness.

Nor need its precious elements, easily within the grasp of both the primitive believer and the most profound scholar, be lost for the lack of complicated formulas or definitions. Ellen White hinted at this in a statement written in 1891.

Many commit the error of trying to define minutely the fine points of distinction between justification and sanctification. Into the definitions of these two terms they often bring their own ideas and speculations. Why try to be more minute than is Inspiration on the vital question of righteousness by faith? Why try to work out every minute point, as if the salvation of the soul depended upon all having exactly your understanding

of this matter? All cannot see in the same line of vision.—[Manuscript 21, 1891](#) (see also *The SDA Bible Commentary*, Ellen G. White Comments, on [Romans 3:24-28](#), p. 1072).

The events of late 1888 and the few years that followed reveal the story of the fruitage of the momentous meeting held in Minneapolis.

[416] **Chapter 32—(1888-1889) Taking the Message of
Minneapolis to the Churches**

With mixed emotions Ellen White traveled from Minneapolis to Battle Creek following the General Conference session. Her heart rejoiced with the precious revived truth of Christ our righteousness. Somewhat fearfully, however, she pondered what to expect in the attitude of the leaders residing in Battle Creek to whom the people looked. She did not have to wait long for the answer.

After an absence she would customarily fill the pulpit in the Tabernacle on her first Sabbath back in the city. This she was now invited to do. Two local elders from the church called on her Sabbath morning to inquire what her subject would be. Understanding well the intent of the question, she replied that this was a matter best left between her and the Lord. She urged the men to invite also A. T. Jones to speak soon in the Tabernacle. They replied they would have to check with Uriah Smith. “Then do this at once,” Ellen White urged, “for time is precious and there is a message to come to this people and the Lord requires you to open the way.”—[Manuscript 30, 1889](#).

It was now clear that those whose hearts were fired with the light revived at Minneapolis would have to work around the prejudice of some of the leaders who had long resided in Battle Creek, and take the message to the churches. Even the church paper, the *Review and Herald*, would be of but little help under the circumstances.

[417] And take it to the churches Ellen White and A. T. Jones did. Both began in the pulpit of the Battle Creek Tabernacle. In the normal order of things, meetings of one kind or another were held in the local conferences through the coming months. Further, by special arrangement of the General Conference Committee, three institutes were held during the spring and summer. The General Conference session late in October climaxed activities for the year. In a unique three-page statement near the close of 1889, Ellen White

summarized in sweeping terms a review of her activities between the two General Conference sessions, 1888 and 1889.

Her Resume of Labors Through 1889

After the General Conference [of 1888] I journeyed to Battle Creek and commenced labor in Battle Creek. Visited Potterville [Michigan], by invitation, to attend the State ministers' meeting [November 22-27]. Returned to Battle Creek, and the same week felt urged by the Spirit of God to go to Des Moines, Iowa. Attended the Iowa ministers' meeting [November 29 to December 5]; spoke six times.

Returned to Battle Creek and labored in speaking to the institutions in this place, the Sanitarium, especially during the Week of Prayer [December 15-22] in the early morning. I also spoke on other occasions to patients and helpers. Spoke to the workers in the office of publication. Spoke in the Tabernacle.

Attended the South Lancaster meeting [beginning January 10]. Spoke there eleven times. Stopped on our way to Washington, D.C., and spoke in the evening to a goodly number assembled in the Brooklyn Mission. Spoke six times in Washington. Spoke on our returning route one evening in Williamsport. Spent Sabbath and first day in [Syracuse] New York. Spoke three times and was several hours in important council.

Returned to Battle Creek [February 4] and labored earnestly. Attended two weeks' meeting in Chicago [March 28-April 8] [[The Review and Herald, May 7, 1889](#)]. Spoke there many times. Returned to Battle Creek, attended special meeting for ministers in Battle Creek, and spoke several times. Continued to labor in Battle Creek until the Kansas camp meeting; was three weeks in that workers' meeting [May 7 to 21] and camp meeting [May 21-28]. Labored to my utmost strength to help the people assembled. Attended meeting at

Williamsport June 5-11. Spoke ten times, including morning meetings.

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Attended camp meeting in [Rome] New York [June 11-18] and labored as God gave me strength. Returned worn and exhausted to Battle Creek and was obliged to refrain from speaking for a time. Attended camp meeting at Wexford, Michigan [June 25-July 2], and the Lord strengthened me to speak to the people. After the meeting I was again prostrated through over labor.

Attended the camp meeting in Kalamazoo [Michigan, August 13 to 20], and the Lord strengthened me to speak and labor for the people. Returning home to Battle Creek, I was again prostrated, but the Lord helped me. I attended the meeting in Saginaw [Michigan, August 27 to September 3], and to the praise of God He raised me above my feebleness, and I was made strong when before the people.

After the meeting I was again greatly prostrated but started on my journey to attend camp meeting in Colorado [September 10-17]. The Lord greatly blessed me in these meetings as I bore my testimony. I then continued my journey to California.

I spoke twice to the people in Healdsburg. Attended Oakland meeting and was very sick, but the Lord raised me up and strengthened me with His Spirit and power, and I spoke to the people eight times and several times before committees and ministers and in morning meetings. Then I came across the Rocky Mountains to attend the [1889] General Conference.—[Manuscript 25, 1889](#).

Michigan State Meeting at Potterville

The Michigan State meeting convened in late November, 1888, opening on Thursday, November 22 and extending to Tuesday, November 27. I. D. Van Horn, conference president and long-time acquaintance of Ellen White, invited her to attend. This she did, speaking five times. In his report Van Horn, who had been with

ministers at Minneapolis who had treated lightly the presentations made there, often with jesting, reported:

From the very first, a deep feeling of solemnity rested upon all, and no manifestation of levity or lightness was shown at any time. Sister White was with us, and her clear testimony each day, evidently dictated by the Spirit of God, added much to the interest and power of the meeting. By this, a mold and character were given which will not soon be forgotten by those who were present.

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A. T. Jones was present a part of the time, and gave three discourses, two of which related to our nation, with the impending issues relating to church and state, and the warning—the third angel’s message—that must be given by our people. Surely there is no time to idle away, for the crisis is right upon us; the battle must be fought and the victory won.—*Ibid.*, [December 11, 1888](#)

This was typical of many reports of important meetings held through 1889. The Blair amendment to the United States Constitution and the threat of Sunday laws that it posed was a prominent topic. The reception of the message of Minneapolis usually served as a dominant motivating influence, even though at times it was resisted initially. Much to Ellen White’s disappointment, the resistance at the Potterville meeting was maintained to the end.

Ellen White’s Sixty-First Birthday

But first, a brief interlude, as for a few hours seemingly ever-present concerns were laid aside for a celebration of Sister White’s birthday. Monday morning, November 26, she spoke to the workers at Potterville, then took the train to Battle Creek. Soon she was settled in pleasant rooms at the Sanitarium. She reported in a letter to Mary:

Soon after I arrived, all tired out with labor, sisters began to come in and I did not mistrust anything for some time, and at last learned that it was a little party

of my old friends to celebrate my sixty-first birthday. We all took dinner which had been arranged at the Sanitarium. All passed off well and pleasantly. I was too thoroughly wearied out to enjoy the matter as I otherwise would.—[Letter 82a, 1888](#).

Urged by the Spirit of God, on Thursday she took the train for Des Moines, Iowa, to attend the six-day Statewide ministers' meeting; she spoke six times.

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The Remarkable Revival in Battle Creek

It was just after this, in Battle Creek, that the real breakthrough came. J. O. Corliss, Jones, and Ellen White led out in the meetings of the Week of Prayer. It was scheduled from December 15 to 22—but it lasted a month. As the week opened, Ellen White, because of infirmities of the moment, dared not leave the Sanitarium. So she began her work there, with physicians, nurses, and the rest of the Sanitarium staff. Jones and Corliss held meetings at the Tabernacle, the publishing house, and the college. Reported Ellen White in the *Review*:

The revival services held during the Week of Prayer and since that time have accomplished a good work in the Battle Creek church. Elders A. T. Jones, J. O. Corliss, and others took an active part in conducting the meetings. The principal topic dwelt upon was justification by faith, and this truth came as meat in due season to the people of God. The living oracles of God were presented in new and precious light....

The truth as it is in Jesus, accompanied by divine energy, has been brought before the people, and we have reason to praise God that it has been with marked effect upon the church. The work of deep heart searching has been gradually going forward. Many have sought the Lord with confession of sins and contrition of soul, and have been blessed and made joyful by the God of their salvation. Those who have hitherto been almost

destitute of faith have discerned its simplicity, and have been enabled to lay hold of the promises of God.—[The Review and Herald, February 12, 1889.](#)

The meetings held daily in the college were reported as intensely interesting, with the Spirit of the Lord working upon hearts.

At the Sanitarium, Ellen White met with such members of the staff who could be freed from their duties each morning at five-thirty. “I had much freedom,” she wrote, “in speaking to the workers from the various departments.... There were many whose minds had been clouded with doubt, but the light received from the explanation of Scripture encouraged their faith, while the truth was revealed to their minds and hearts in a light in which they had never before seen it.”—[Ibid.](#)

At the publishing house, meetings were held daily from twelve to one o'clock. As the week progressed and she gained strength, she was able to slip down and meet with the workers. Of her experience there, which refreshed her soul, she wrote:

[421]

Many good testimonies were borne, and it made my heart glad to see those who had been connected with the publishing work for a period of thirty years rejoice as young converts rejoice in their first love. They expressed their gladness and gratitude of heart for the sermons that had been preached by A. T. Jones; they saw the truth, goodness, mercy, and love of God as they never before had seen it....

There were many who testified that they were free in the Lord—not free from temptations, for they had these to contend with every day, but they believed that their sins were forgiven. Oh, how we long to have every soul come out into the liberty of the sons of God!—[Ibid.](#)

From day to day Ellen White spelled out in her diary many of the activities, and the progress that was made toward spiritual victory.

Thursday at 5:00 P.M. I spoke to the college students. The Lord gave me the word which seemed to

reach hearts. Professor Prescott arose and attempted to speak, but his heart was too full. There he stood five minutes in complete silence, weeping. When he did speak he said, "I am glad I am a Christian." He made very pointed remarks. His heart seemed to be broken by the Spirit of the Lord. I invited those who had not accepted the truth, and those who had not the evidence of their acceptance with God, to come forward. It seemed that the whole company were on the move....

Thursday night I spoke at the Tabernacle, and many bore precious testimonies that the Lord had forgiven their sins and given them a new heart. The words of truth spoken by Elder Jones had been blessed to their souls.—[Manuscript 25, 1888](#).

Sabbath was the last day of the Week of Prayer. Ellen White wrote:

[422]

Elder Jones spoke in the forenoon with great freedom. The message the Lord has given him to bear has taken hold upon his soul and the souls of those who have heard and received the light which the Lord has given them.

In the afternoon I spoke to the people and then there was a social meeting. Many confessed that they were much blessed during the Week of Prayer.—[Ibid.](#)

But the revival was just well under way, and much the same program was continued. Sunday just before noon she was called down to the publishing house to address the workers at the noon hour. In the afternoon Jones spoke in the Tabernacle. Ellen White continues her account:

In the evening, listened to another discourse from Brother Jones upon the love of God. Soul-stirring truths were uttered, and many in that large congregation were fed with the Bread of Life and their hearts were awakened to more earnest activity and zeal.—[Ibid.](#)

About this time she declared:

Wherever this message [righteousness by faith] comes, its fruits are good. A vigor and a vital energy are brought into the church, and where the message is accepted, there hope and courage and faith beam in the countenances of all those who open their eyes to see, their understanding to perceive, and their hearts to receive the great treasure of truth.—[Manuscript 24, 1888](#).

Such was the case in Battle Creek. Ellen White addressed herself to practical topics. On Sabbath, December 29, she arose early and engaged in prayer and reading, and in writing a discourse for the people:

I spoke in afternoon from [Isaiah 58](#) upon the Sabbath and the many ways the Lord could be robbed. Read in regard to robbing God in tithes and offerings. Called the people forward for prayers.—[Manuscript 25, 1888](#).

Sunday evening she spoke in the Tabernacle to a well-filled house, dwelling particularly on evil speaking and its sure results.

All these sins of which we have been guilty must be removed, and all this robbery of God must be repented of and the rubbish removed from the door of the heart....

[423]

Brother Winslow was coming to the light. Said he had been to some whom he had wronged and made confession, and the Lord blessed him. Brother Lucas and his wife came forward and made confessions. Brother Lucas said he had not paid his tithes; he had robbed God of \$500 which he would pay into the treasury in a short time. Our meeting continued until past ten o'clock. The Spirit of the Lord was working upon the hearts.—[Ibid.](#)

The next day found Ellen White calling on several families in personal work, including Oren Frisbie and his wife and the Lucas family. Writing of it, she commented, "The Lord is certainly at

work, subduing and purifying the hearts of all who choose to be fully on the Lord's side.—[Ibid.](#) She visited the Lucas family again on January 2, 1889, and noted in her diary:

He has paid no tithe for two years and he was becoming a changed man in spirituality because he was robbing God. He gave me a note for the treasury of God for \$571.50. He recounted up all the interest, and faithfully paid an honest tithe. Then he was happy.—[Manuscript 17, 1889.](#)

Others were visited also, some giving their notes for withheld tithe, to be paid soon. Ellen White wrote to Mary on Sunday, January 6, picking up a letter she had started two weeks before:

I have tried to get at it to finish this letter, but I could not do it. There would be private testimonies to write and many to counsel with and sometimes I have spoken at three different assemblies each day, but the Lord has wonderfully sustained me. The work of God is seen in our midst. Meetings have been held now four weeks and many souls have a true conversion. They say they never knew what the converting power of God was before.

Sabbath, yesterday, was a precious day indeed. I talked to a full house, and the blessing of the Lord rested upon me in large measure, and the whole congregation was moved....Oh, what a changed atmosphere from four weeks ago. Jesus indeed was present.—[Letter 83, 1889.](#)

[424] In concluding her report of the victorious experience in the *Review and Herald* of February 12, she exclaimed: “May the good work begun in the Battle Creek church be carried onward and upward till every soul shall be consecrated, purified, refined, and fitted for the society of heavenly angels!” But this wish was not to see fulfillment, for some who had been at Minneapolis and had resisted the light given there still held back.

The decision in response to light is a personal one, and some took the wrong course. Wrote Ellen White:

The blessings of that Week of Prayer extended through the church. Confessions were made. Those who had robbed God in tithes and in offerings confessed their wrong and made restitution, and many were blessed of God who had never felt that God had forgiven their sins. All these precious fruits evidenced the work of God.... The Lord wrought in our midst, but some did not receive the blessing.—[Manuscript 30, 1889](#).

Ellen White and others rejoiced when, as the subject of righteousness by faith was presented at the various meetings through 1889, some of those who had taken a firm stand in resistance at Minneapolis saw their true condition, repented, and joined their brethren.

But what of those who, in firm self-complacency, resisted light and truth in the face of clear evidence? They paid a price, of which Ellen White wrote later:

I have been shown that not one of the company who cherished the spirit manifested at that meeting would again have clear light to discern the preciousness of the truth sent them from heaven until they humbled their pride and confessed that they were not actuated by the Spirit of God, but that their minds and hearts were filled with prejudice. The Lord desired to come near to them, to bless them and heal them of their backslidings, but they would not hearken. They were actuated by the same spirit that inspired Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.—[Letter 2a, 1892](#).

The Revival at South Lancaster

As S. N. Haskell announced the general meeting to be held at South Lancaster, Massachusetts, to open on Thursday, January 10, he stated that “the important interests to be considered make this meeting one of the most important, if not the most so, of any ever held in South Lancaster.”—[The Review and Herald, January 1, 1889](#). He enumerated the reasons why he believed this was so. First: “The

important crisis that has been brought upon us as a people by the Sunday bill now before Congress“: and second: “Another important consideration is the presence of Sister White.” He spoke of the great value of her counsel and testimony “in a time like this.” It was time also for the annual meeting of the South Lancaster Academy, and the New England Tract and Missionary Society would hold its general meeting.

Wednesday evening, January 9, after a day filled with important interviews and the writing of “several important letters that could not be safely delayed” ([Manuscript 17, 1889](#)), Ellen White took the train at Battle Creek to meet the New England appointments. Arriving at South Lancaster early Friday afternoon, she found W. C. White already on the ground. She spoke at the Sabbath afternoon meeting. The church was well filled with Adventists who lived in the community, the students in the school, and delegates from Maine, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and other states ([Ibid., March 5, 1889](#)). In a report written for the *Review and Herald*, she disclosed her sentiments as she stood before the people that Sabbath afternoon:

We realized that there was a work to be done in setting things in order, which man’s best efforts could not accomplish without the aid of God. Our hearts were drawn out in earnest supplication to God that He would work in our behalf. We had a message of present truth for the people; and if they would place themselves in the channel of light, they would be prepared to do a work for others similar to the work that should be done for them....

On Sabbath afternoon, many hearts were touched, and many souls were fed on the bread that cometh down from heaven.—[Ibid.](#)

Her address was an earnest appeal to be right with God. She declared:

It is the privilege of everyone to say, “I will carry out my Captain’s orders to the very letter, feeling or no feeling. I will not wait for a happy sensation, for a

mysterious impulse. I will say, ‘What are my orders? What is the line of my duty? What says the Master to me? Is the line of communication open between God and my soul? What is my position before God?’” Just as soon as we come into right relations to God, we shall understand our duty and do it; and we shall not think the good things we do entitle us to salvation.

As she brought her soul-stirring address to a close she declared, “We are coming to a crisis, and I am in terror for our souls.” She then asked some penetrating questions:

Why is it that we find men leaving the faith? Are we in a position where we shall know what we believe, and shall not be shaken out? That souls leave the truth should not discourage us in the least, but only make us seek more earnestly for the blessing of God.

It is not the education, or the talents, or the position of men, that is to save them. We are to be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. How do you stand before God today? The question is not, How will you stand in the day of trouble, or at some future time? but How is it with your soul today? ...We want a personal, individual experience today. Today, we want Christ abiding with us.—*Ibid.*, April 9, 1889.

This was the beginning of a revival that was to extend far beyond the scheduled dates for the convocation, with a response beyond all expectations, as well. Of this Ellen White reported:

As our brethren and sisters opened their hearts to the light, they obtained a better knowledge of what constitutes faith. The Lord was very precious; He was ready to strengthen His people. The meetings continued a week beyond their first appointment.

The school was dismissed, and all made earnest work of seeking the Lord. Elder Jones came from Boston, and labored most earnestly for the people,

speaking twice and sometimes three times a day. The flock of God were fed with soul-nourishing food. The very message the Lord has sent to the people of this time was presented in the discourses. Meetings were in progress from early morning till night, and the results were highly satisfactory....

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Both students and teachers have shared largely in the blessing of God. The deep movings of the Spirit of God have been felt upon almost every heart. The general testimony was borne by those who attended the meeting that they had obtained an experience beyond anything they had known before. They testified their joy that Christ had forgiven their sins. Their hearts were filled with thanksgiving and praise to God. Sweet peace was in their souls. They loved everyone, and felt that they could rest in the love of God.—*Ibid.*, March 5, 1889.

Truly the presenting of righteousness by faith yielded good fruit. Ellen White had participated in many revivals across the land and overseas, but of this experience at South Lancaster she wrote:

I have never seen a revival work go forward with such thoroughness, and yet remain so free from all undue excitement. There was no urging or inviting. The people were not called forward, but there was a solemn realization that Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.

The honest in heart were ready to confess their sins, and to bring forth fruit to God by repentance and restoration, as far as it lay in their power. We seemed to breathe in the very atmosphere of heaven. Angels were indeed hovering around.

Friday evening the social service began at five, and it was not closed until nine. No time was lost, for everyone had a living testimony to bear. The meeting would have continued hours longer, if it had been allowed to run

its full course; but it was thought best to close at that time.—[Ibid.](#)

Sabbath morning A. T. Jones spoke with “great power” ([Manuscript 17, 1889](#)), and in the afternoon Ellen White presented her message “with great freedom.” She wrote:

This was a most precious Sabbath to our souls. We felt that we were breathing in an heavenly atmosphere, and Christ was indeed found of all those who sought for Him. This is indeed a wonderful outpouring of the Spirit of God, testifying to us what the Lord is willing to do for His people who will believe in Jesus for themselves.—[Ibid.](#)

Through Sunday the meetings continued with no diminishing of interest; the final meeting was held Monday morning.

[428]

Revivals Across the Land

As meetings were held through the spring and summer across the land, Ellen White and Jones labored as a team. This chapter opened with her summary of this work. No two meetings were alike. R. M. Kilgore, president of the Illinois Conference, in reporting the two-week-long convocation in Chicago, which grew out of the “State meeting,” observed that “at the beginning of the meeting, darkness and lack of faith seemed to close up the avenues by which the Spirit of God could operate upon our minds.”—[Ibid., May 7, 1889](#). At Minneapolis he had hesitated about receiving the light that was caused to shine there. Not until midway in the Chicago meetings did the tide turn. Ellen White described this in a letter to Willie:

There began to be a break on Thursday [April 4], and on Friday the meetings were excellent, but oh, how hard it was to educate the people to look away from themselves to Jesus and to His righteousness. A continuous effort has had to be put forth.—[Letter 1, 1889](#).

She wrote of the effort called for to aid the people—in this case mostly ministers—to reach out by faith and cling to the righteousness of Christ.

We have been earnestly and steadily at work to encourage faith in our brethren. This seemed to be as difficult as to teach a child to take its first steps alone.—[Letter 85, 1889](#).

Now that the enlightenment of the Spirit of God has come, all seem to be learning fast; but at first the lessons presented seemed strange and new, and their hearts and minds could not take them in. More real good could now be accomplished in one day than in one full week before, because they have now opened their hearts to Jesus, and He is abiding with them. All regret that they have been so long ignorant of what constituted true religion. They are sorry that they have not known that it was true religion to depend entirely upon Christ's righteousness, and not upon works of merit.—[Letter 1, 1889](#).

[429] In this letter she names some of the ministers who experienced a turnaround in their experience: Ballenger, Tate, and the conference president, Kilgore. “He talks things right out,” she reported to Willie:

He weeps and rejoices. He says he has had a new conversion, that his eyes are opened, that he no longer sees men as trees walking in his religious experience, but that he sees clearly that it is Christ's righteousness that he must rely upon or he is a lost man.—[Ibid.](#)

As Kilgore wrote his report of the meeting for publication in the *Review and Herald*, he penned these words:

The labors of Sister White and Elder Jones were highly appreciated by our brethren. The clear and forcible elucidation of the truth of justification by faith, as set forth by Brother Jones, was truly meat in due season. As Christ was lifted up in all His attributes of

love and mercy for poor sinners, we were drawn nearer to Him; and from faith to faith, we were enabled to see new beauties and glories in the great plan of human redemption. The righteousness of God's law and the exalted character of Jesus Christ made us all sensible that sin had wrought ruin in the human family and rendered sinners wholly unable to rescue themselves.

Sister White labored hard for the best good of all present; and we have never seen her present her testimony with more power than at this time.—[The Review and Herald, May 7, 1889.](#)

Such victories brought joy to Ellen White's heart. The Sabbath meetings she felt were especially precious, and wrote: "From the commencement of the Sabbath to its close it was a day of especial blessing, and it forms one of the most precious pictures that I have to hang in memory's hall to look upon with delight and rejoicing. Good is the Lord and greatly to be praised."—[Letter 1, 1889.](#)

The Williamsport Camp Meeting

Thursday night, May 30, Ellen White, accompanied by Sara McEnterfer, boarded the train in Battle Creek bound for Williamsport, Pennsylvania, where the camp meeting was to open Tuesday, June 4. Because of heavy rains, the train moved slowly. They had expected to reach Williamsport the next afternoon at five o'clock, but they could soon see that this objective could not be met. Bridges had been swept away and roads washed out by the Johnstown Flood. When they reached Elmira, New York, they were advised to give up their journey.

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But neither Ellen nor Sara was easily dissuaded. They were determined to go as far as possible, hoping that the reports concerning the conditions of travel were exaggerated. At Canton, some forty miles from Williamsport, their car was switched onto a side track because of a washout; they spent the Sabbath there in a hotel. Determined to get through, Ellen and Sara put their heads together and left no stones unturned in their attempts to find a way. Traveling by carriage part of the way and walking part of the way, they compassed

the forty miles in four days, in a hair-raising venture described in her report in [The Review and Herald, July 30, 1889](#). One interesting feature was the manner in which she was sustained physically. She reported:

We were obliged to walk miles on this journey, and it seemed marvelous that I could endure to travel as I did. Both of my ankles were broken years ago, and ever since they have been weak. Before leaving Battle Creek for Kansas, I sprained one of my ankles, and was confined to crutches for some time; but in this emergency I felt no weakness or inconvenience, and traveled safely over the rough, sliding rocks.

At one point they waited for three hours as, at their direction, a raft was constructed upon which to ferry the carriage in which they traveled across a swiftly flowing stream. A small boat pulled it across, the horses swam the stream, and the two lady travelers were rowed across. Then they continued their journey by horse and carriage. The destruction reminded Ellen White of what is to come in the last days, and encouraged her to be even more diligent in preparation for that day. Her report in the *Review* closes with these words:

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We arrived at Williamsport at three o'clock Wednesday afternoon. The experience and anxiety through which I passed on this journey greatly exhausted me in mind and body; but we were grateful that we had suffered no serious trouble, and that the Lord had preserved us from the perils of the land, and prospered us on our way.

When they reached the town they were told that the campground had been flooded out and that the tents had been taken down. Actually, they found the tents had been moved to higher ground and the meeting was in progress.

While it was a difficult meeting to get to, it was an easy meeting to work in. Wrote Ellen White:

The Lord had a work for me to do at Williamsport. I had much freedom in speaking to the brethren and sisters there assembled. They did not seem to possess a spirit of unbelief and of resistance to the message the Lord had sent them. I felt that it was a great privilege to speak to those whose hearts were not barricaded with prejudice and evil surmising. My soul went out in grateful praise that, weary and exhausted as I was, I did not have to carry upon my heart the extra burden of seeing brethren and sisters whom I loved unimpressed and in resistance of the light that God had graciously permitted to shine upon them.

I did not have to set my face as a flint, and press and urge upon them that which I knew to be truth. The message was eagerly welcomed; and although I had to speak words of reproof and warning, as well as words of encouragement, all were heartily received by my hearers.—*Ibid.*, August 13, 1889.

Ellen White spoke thirteen times at the Williamsport camp meeting, including the early-morning meetings.

She worked her way west in the late summer to Colorado and then to California. After the camp meeting in Oakland she hastened back to Battle Creek for the General Conference session, which opened Friday morning, October 18.

The 1889 General Conference Session

Carefully Ellen White watched developments at the 1889 General Conference session. When the meeting was well along she was ready to report her observations:

We are having most excellent meetings. The spirit that was in the meeting at Minneapolis is not here. All moves off in harmony. There is a large attendance of delegates. Our five o'clock morning meeting is well attended, and the meetings good. All the testimonies to which I have listened have been of an elevating character. They say that the past year has been the best

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of their life; the light shining forth from the Word of God has been clear and distinct—justification by faith, Christ our righteousness. The experiences have been very interesting.

I have attended all but two morning meetings. At eight o'clock Brother Jones speaks upon the subject of justification by faith, and great interest is manifested. There is a growth in faith and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. There are quite a number who have not had an opportunity to hear upon this subject before, but they are taking it in, and are being fed with large morsels from the Lord's table.

The universal testimony from those who have spoken has been that this message of light and truth which has come to our people is just the truth for this time, and wherever they go among the churches, light, and relief, and the blessing of God is sure to come in. We have a feast of fat things, and when we see souls grasping the light we are rejoiced.—[Manuscript 10, 1889](#) (see also [Selected Messages 1:361, 362](#)).

What she wrote to Mary White, on Tuesday, October 29, is significant in its portrayal of this experience and of the attitude of the ministers present:

We are having a good meeting. There seems to be no dissension. The testimonies which have been borne by ministers are that the light that came to them at Minneapolis and during the past year has been highly appreciated and they will walk in the light. They have seen more of the blessedness of the truth and the love of Jesus than ever before in their lives. That success has attended their labors during the past year as never before and they enjoyed the presence and the love of God in large measure. This has been the testimony borne and the meetings are excellent.

At the same time there are a number who apparently stand where they did at Minneapolis. Oh, that

God would work mightily for His people and scatter the clouds of darkness and let the sunlight of His glory in.

I am much pleased with the meeting. Thus far, not one voice of opposition is heard. Unity seems to prevail.—[Letter 76, 1889](#).

Two days later she wrote Mary: “Our meetings are crowded in thick and fast. We see in five o’clock meetings and in eight o’clock meetings many tokens for good. The testimonies are of altogether a different character than they have been in any conference we have had for some time. I do long for the work to go deep and I believe it is.”—[Letter 77, 1889](#). Speaking of the manner in which the Lord had blessed her, she wrote:

I am much better in health than I have been for years. After I came home, I was very weary; but I was lifted up above my infirmities and am real well. Praise the name of the Lord. I look to the Lord and trust in Him. He has done all things well.—[Ibid.](#)

E. G. White Review Articles Tell The Story

Fifteen of the thirty-one E. G. White articles appearing in the *Review and Herald* for the first nine months of 1889 are stenographic reports of her addresses given throughout this period of special labor. These, together with her five reports of the convocations, carried the benefits of her arduous work to the church generally.

Some today ask why this movement in the church, emphasizing the subject of righteousness by faith, did not usher in the “loud cry.” In answer, it might be suggested that the polarization of attitudes militated against such an advance. Further, that which proved to be so great a blessing to many individuals could easily be allowed to slip away if the recipient failed to renew daily the precious experience. With many, the righteousness by faith message brought a turning point in their experience, lifting them to an enduring, victorious life. The numerous articles E. G. White published in the journals of the church and the E. G. White books published from 1888 onward, especially *Steps to Christ* (1892), *The Desire of Ages* (1898),

and *Christ's Object Lessons* (1900), kept the theme of "Christ our righteousness" before Seventh-day Adventists and the world.

Chapter 33—(1888-1889) Advances in Book Production

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Should a new Adventist seek to purchase, in 1885 (the year Ellen White went to Europe), all the E. G. White books available, he would be able to secure the following:

Early Writings, an 1882 republication of the first three E. G. White books issued in the 1850s.

The Spirit of Prophecy, volumes 1-4, which told the great controversy story. The first three were four-hundred-page books, and the fourth, five hundred pages.

Testimonies for the Church, volumes 1-4, a reprint of thirty testimony pamphlets issued between the years 1855 and 1881 in four volumes of about seven hundred pages each.

Two *Testimony* pamphlets, [Numbers 31 and 32](#).

Sketches From the Life of Paul, a 334-page volume.

Older Adventists might have had the little *Spiritual Gifts*, Volumes I-IV, the forerunners of the *Spirit of Prophecy* series. The second volume is a biographical work issued in 1860. They might also have had *How to Live*, comprising six pamphlets on health, each with one feature article from Ellen White and the balance, related material selected and compiled by her; and a sixty-four-page pamphlet, *Appeal to Mothers*.

At this time a far-reaching concept was emerging, with the use of *The Great Controversy*, volume 4 of the *Spirit of Prophecy* series, being successfully introduced by colporteurs to the general public. It was a popular book; ten printings of five thousand each had come from the presses of the Review and Herald and the Pacific Press in four years' time. In 1886 its popularity was enhanced by the introduction of twenty-two illustrations, and it was printed on a larger page size. This, the sixth printing of the book, met with

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gratifying sale to the general public. Such a response broadened the vistas as to what could be done with the E. G. White books dealing with the controversy story. Attention was next focused on volume 1, which covered Old Testament history to the time of Solomon.

Then there were the two volumes on the life of Christ in the heart of the four-volume *Spirit of Prophecy* set. From these was developed a single volume, translated and published in Danish-Norwegian, French, and German. Produced by the Review and Herald, it was an attractive colporteur book and enjoyed a good sale in Europe as well as in America. In this period of expanding concepts, there was some talk of issuing it in the English language, but this was not done, possibly because the book seemed to need some expansion in the area that dealt with the earlier years of Christ's ministry.

When Ellen White and her son went to Europe, it was with the thought that if she should be detained there, volume 1 of the *Spirit of Prophecy* would be enlarged and adapted for the reading of the general public. When it was ascertained that the sojourn would be extended, Marian Davis was called to Basel to assist Ellen White in this and other projects. The objective was to make volume 1 similar in scope and format to the upgraded volume 4, *The Great Controversy*. The subjects of some of Ellen White's sermons in Basel reflected her application to this phase of Bible history.

But not until late 1886 was Ellen White able to undertake seriously the revising and enlarging of this volume, working toward what is known today as *Patriarchs and Prophets*. Through January, February, and March, 1887, this work continued with intensity, with the hope that the revised and enlarged book could be ready for sale by Christmas. But plans took a sudden change.

Attention Turned to the Great Controversy

The upgraded five-hundred-page *Great Controversy* was enjoying an escalating sale. This led C. H. Jones, manager of the Pacific Press, to write Ellen White and her son, in Europe, pointing out the need of new printing plates. This would call for a resetting of the type for the book.

[436] The call for new typesetting put into motion a study of the text, with a contemplation of enlarging the book. Although at the time of

writing, Ellen White had somewhat in mind that the book could reach beyond the ranks of Seventh-day Adventists, yet the terminology, and in some cases the content, was geared largely to Adventists. Now with the book being distributed by colporteurs to the general public, some adaptation of wording seemed desirable. Added to this was the fact that in Europe she was in the midst of Reformation history, a subject that bore heavily on the contents of the book. Moreover, the book was currently being translated into French and German. The combined elements called for a switch in plans for literary work in Basel. Volume 1 was laid aside, and a concentrated effort was made on volume 4.

Study of the volume took on double objectives: to improve the book for a broader reading public, and to aid translators in obtaining a grasp of the finer meanings of the author. The fact that plans had already been set for Ellen White's return to the United States in late summer led to a hastening of this work.

An Enlightening Experience

On May 18, in a letter to C. H. Jones, manager of the Pacific Press, W. C. White wrote an enlightening account of what took place in Basel:

At last we are able to send you the corrected copy for the first four chapters of volume 4. About the time that your letter came about resetting it, we were pressing the matter of having it translated into the French and German.... I proposed that the translators and proofreaders of both the French and German, with Brother and Sister Whitney, and Marian and myself, should meet every day, and read, and discuss a chapter. By this means the translators would get the spirit of the work, and would translate better, and the proofreaders, also having a part in this reading, would be prepared to detect the errors in the first reading, instead of the last one, as is often the case now.

We carried the work through, although it cost a great effort. As we read, we found some things that were

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figurative expressions that were hard to translate, and other things that were easy to be understood by the class of people to whom it was at first thought that the book would go, expressions familiar to Adventists, and those who had heard their preaching, but which must be very blind to the ordinary reader, not especially familiar with religious phrases.

Again, we found parts of the subject that were very briefly treated, because the reader was supposed to be familiar with the subject. Mother has given attention to all of these points, and has thought that the book ought to be so corrected, and enlarged, as to be of the most possible good to the large number of promiscuous readers to whom it is now being offered. And she has taken hold with a remarkable energy to fill in some parts that are rather too brief.—A-2 WCW, p. 245.

In the 1884 book, chapter five, “Early Reformers,” devoted a little more than three pages to the life and work of John Huss and his companion worker, Jerome. This was quite disproportionate to the more than fifty pages that set forth Luther’s contribution to the Reformation. It was thought that a chapter, or even two, should be given to Huss and Jerome, and Ellen White set about to provide a sketch of the history. In a hastily handwritten manuscript of eighty-nine pages, drawing heavily on Wylie, she supplied the lack just before she left on her last visit to the northern countries. She left to Marian Davis the task of editing the material for the book and cutting it back to proper length.

W. C. White referred to this expansion of the manuscript and of the reaction to an examination of the text of *The Great Controversy* from the standpoint of the average non-Adventist reader:

Mother has written enough about Huss and Jerome to make one or two new chapters. She has written something about Zwingli, and may speak of Calvin. The chapter on the two witnesses has been doubled in size, and quite a change will be made in the chapter

on William Miller. And some important additions are made to the sanctuary chapter.

In some places more scriptures are introduced, and all the way, more footnote references are used.

You can hardly imagine how differently some things sound when read to sharp, intelligent people, who know they must understand each sentence in order to translate it right, and who are ignorant of the Advent Movement, and experience, than when read where all who hear are familiar with the subject. And as many of the American readers to whom the book will go are nearly as ignorant of the subjects treated and some of them more ignorant than those who read with us, it seemed to us that what needed to be changed in form of expression to make it plain for translation ought to be the same for your new edition.... I think that the additions will swell the work one hundred pages of its present size.— Ibid.

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Then White added, “Please have Elders A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner [associate editor and editor, respectively, of the *Signs of the Times*] give careful criticism to the corrections, and to the whole matter.”

Experience in Europe Benefited the Book

Some years later as W. C. White answered questions concerning his mother’s literary work, he recounted the experience in Basel and introduced a point of unique interest.

When we reached those chapters relating to the Reformation in Germany and France, the translators would comment on the appropriateness of the selection of historical events which Sister White had chosen, and in two instances which I remember, they suggested that there were other events of corresponding importance which she had not mentioned.

When this was brought to her attention, she requested that the histories be brought to her that she

might consider the importance of the events which had been mentioned. The reading of the history refreshed to her mind that which she had seen, after which she wrote a description of the event.—WCW to L. E. Froom, December 13, 1934 (see also [Selected Messages 3:465](#)).

He wrote also of Ellen White's special interest in Zurich during the last week or two they were in Switzerland:

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I was with Mother when we visited Zurich and I well remember how thoroughly her mind was aroused by seeing the old cathedral and the marketplace, and she spoke of them as they were in the days of Zwingli.

During her two years' residence in Basel, she visited many places where events of special importance occurred in the Reformation days. This refreshed her memory as to what she had been shown and this led to important enlargement in those portions of the book dealing with Reformation days.— *Ibid.* (see also [Ibid., 3:465](#)).

In 1905, speaking to believers in Takoma Park, Maryland, W. C. White recalled one experience in Europe that indicated Ellen White's insight into Reformation history.

One Sabbath, at Basel, I was reading Wylie's *History of Protestantism*, telling about the experience of the Roman armies coming against the Bohemians, and how a large body of persecutors would see a little body of Protestants, and become frightened and beat a hasty retreat. As I read it to Mother, she interrupted me and told me a lot of things in the pages ahead, and told me many things not in the book at all. She said, "I never read about it, but the scene has been presented to me over and over again. I have seen the papal armies, and sometimes before they had come in sight of the Protestants, the angels of God would give them a representation of large armies, that would make them flee."

I said, "Why did you not put that into your book?"
She said, "I did not know where to put it."—DF 105b,
"W. C. White Statements Regarding Mrs. White and
Her Work," December 17, 1905.

In this connection, her account in [The Great Controversy, 116, 117](#), will be read with interest.

Enlargement of Chapter on Huss

Only one chapter in the book could be allotted to John Huss. This meant that much of the comments Ellen White had written in enlarging on Wylie's remarks had to be cut in order to fit the space. Marian Davis, in Basel, did this further work of preparation after Ellen White and Sara had left and were visiting the northern countries. Then the manuscript for the chapters involved was sent to Ellen White in England for her approval and any changes that might be needed (A-2 WCW, p. 307). [440]

In the meantime, J. H. Waggoner, who was to work in Europe for a time, arrived in Basel. He joined Marian, working with her on the chapters for volume 4 and also on the chapters for volume 1 that had been laid aside (Ibid., 337). Marian's work held her in Basel for a month after Ellen White had sailed for America. As he was able, W. C. White made contacts with European firms, seeking appropriate illustrations for both books. As plans stood in the late summer of 1887, they were to be issued as companion volumes.

Deletion of Materials Especially Intended for Adventists

As *The Great Controversy* was now being prepared for wide distribution to the general public, some materials were deleted. W. C. White explained this:

In her public ministry, Mother has shown an ability to select, from the storehouse of truth, matter that is well adapted to the needs of the congregation before her; and she has always thought that, in the selection of matter for publication in her books, the best judgment

should be shown in selecting that which is best suited to the needs of those who will read the book.

Therefore, when the new edition of *Great Controversy* was brought out in 1888, there were left out about twenty pages of matter—four or five pages in a place—which was very instructive to the Adventists of America, but which was not appropriate for readers in other parts of the world.—WCW statement to the General Conference Council, October 30, 1911 (see also [Selected Messages 3:438, 439](#)).

One such deleted item was pages 337 to 340, being the first part of the chapter titled “The Snares of Satan.” In this she presented a view given her of Satan holding a council meeting with his angels to determine the best manner in which to deceive and mislead God’s people. This presentation may be found in [Testimonies to Ministers, pages 472 to 475](#), and of course, in the facsimile reprint of [Spirit of Prophecy, volume 4](#).

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The Great Controversy Finished at Healdsburg

The work on the book was well along when Ellen White and her staff returned to the United States in the late summer of 1887. The completion of the work was the first task to which she gave attention as she and her helpers settled in her Healdsburg home. Her last writing for the book was for the author’s introduction, carrying the date of May, 1888. Here she made a comprehensive statement in the setting of the work of God’s prophets, regarding God’s commission to her to write the book. She declared:

Through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, the scenes of the long-continued conflict between good and evil have been opened to the writer of these pages. From time to time I have been permitted to behold the working, in different ages, of the great controversy between Christ, the Prince of life, the Author of our salvation, and Satan, the prince of evil, the author of sin, the first transgressor of God’s holy law.—[The Great Controversy, x](#).

Being instructed “to trace the history of the controversy in past ages, and especially so to present it as to shed light on the fast-approaching struggle of the future” (Ibid., p. xi), she informed the reader that in pursuance of this purpose she had endeavored to select and group together events in the history of the church. She pointed out that these records presented a foreshadowing of the conflict that lay ahead. Taking this in the light of God’s Word and the illumination of the Holy Spirit, she unveiled devices of the great adversary, Satan. Then she took up the matter of her reference to and use of historical writings.

She explained how she employed quoted material as a matter of convenience, an aid to her writing:

In some cases where a historian has so grouped together events as to afford, in brief, a comprehensive view of the subject, or has summarized details in a convenient manner, his words have been quoted; but in some instances no specific credit has been given, since the quotations are not given for the purpose of citing that writer as authority, but because his statement affords a ready and forcible presentation of the subject.—Ibid., xii.

She had drawn from denominational authors also in presenting views on prophecy. She had been with the pioneers of the church as they earnestly studied Bible doctrines and prophecy. Conclusions were arrived at jointly, and at times one would be the writer to set them before the public, and at times another. She informed her readers:

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In narrating the experience and views of those carrying forward the work of reform in our own time, similar use has been made of their published works.—Ibid.

This would apply particularly to J. N. Andrews and Uriah Smith, and at times to her husband, James White.

Materials Quoted from Historians

In the 1884 *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 4, when presenting the history of the Reformation, Ellen White utilized quotations from D'Aubigne, Wylie, et cetera. In the enlargement of the presentation she brought in considerably more of such materials. In these two books she at times quoted, at times paraphrased, and at times depicted in her own words the events of history that formed the matrix or vehicle for presenting the larger picture, the behind-the-scenes controversy, that had been opened up to her in vision. She and those associated with her did not consider this use of available materials as a matter that called for specific recognition.

Although quotations in the new enlarged edition were used without specific credits, they did stand in quotation marks.

The enlarged edition, which came to be known as the 1888 edition, carried twenty-six full-page illustrations and at the close devoted thirteen pages to general notes and thirteen pages to biographical notes. These notes were prepared by several authors, including J. H. Waggoner, Uriah Smith, and M. C. Wilcox. Marian Davis assisted. The final work progressed slowly; even as late as March 11, 1889, the *Signs of the Times* was still advertising the older, upgraded 1884 book of five hundred pages. The author's introduction for the new enlarged book was dated Healdsburg, California, May, 1888, and the copyright date was given as 1888, but not until September 2, 1889, did the *Signs of the Times* carry an advertisement for it. It was advertised as the "Revised and Enlarged Edition of *The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan*."

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At the time, the newly issued *Bible Readings* was being pressed as the denomination's leading colporteur book. *The Great Controversy* was allowed to wait, neglected, but eventually it became a leading book distributed to the general public.

Patriarchs and Prophets

Patriarchs and Prophets was in the development stage while Ellen White and her staff were in Basel, but it was laid aside in April, 1887, to give priority to *The Great Controversy*. But it was not forgotten, and when Ellen White and her staff could give time

to it, the work advanced, if slowly. At this point she had occasion to write to Canright, who had just left the church. In doing so, she mentioned this book:

I have been writing upon the first volume of *Great Controversy* [*Patriarchs and Prophets*], and it makes me feel very solemn as I review these important subjects—creation and the events from the fall of Satan to the fall of Adam. The Lord seems very near to me as I write, and I am deeply moved as I contemplate this controversy from the beginning to the present time. The workings of the powers of darkness are laid clearly before my mind.—[Testimonies for the Church, 5:572, 573](#).

In January, 1887, W. C. White wrote from Switzerland to G. I. Butler:

Mother is doing her best to complete her manuscript on Old Testament History, and Sister Davis is making good progress in preparing it for the printer. I tell you, my brother, it will be a splendid book. It will have twice as much matter as *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 1, and it will accomplish a great deal more in the matter of teaching present truth. I think it will stand next to volume 4 in value and usefulness.—A-2, WCW, p. 93.

He added, “I wish she had time to prepare her book on the Life of Christ before leaving here, for when we reach America I fear she will have but little time to write.”

Patriarchs and Prophets was published by the Pacific Press in 1890, and was handled like *The Great Controversy*. The text was introduced by a statement explaining the current function of the Spirit of Prophecy in the church. This excellent eight-page presentation was written by Uriah Smith. [The Review and Herald, August 26, 1890](#), announced the availability of the book. [444]

It contained fifty-one illustrations, many of them full-page, prepared expressly for the volume. It contained also eight pages of appendix notes prepared by others than Ellen White.

On November 24, Ellen White wrote of the two companion books:

God gave me the light contained in *Great Controversy* and *Patriarchs and Prophets*, and this light was needed to arouse the people to prepare for the great day of God, which is just before us. These books contain God's direct appeal to the people. Thus He is speaking to the people in stirring words, urging them to make ready for His coming. The light God has given in these books should not be concealed.—[Manuscript 23, 1890](#).

Ellen White did not get to work on the life of Christ before leaving Europe, as W. C. White had wished she might. The single-volume *Life of Christ*, translated from materials from *The Spirit of Prophecy*, volumes 2 and 3, was making its way in Europe, and an English edition was contemplated, but as with *Patriarchs and Prophets* and *The Great Controversy*, any thought given to this conjured up pictures of expanding the materials—and that had to wait for another time. In the interim, a letter from H. P. Holser mentioned a significant development in the distribution of the *Life of Christ* in the Scandinavian countries. The situation that prompted Holser's letter was to be given careful consideration in book preparation during the next decade. From W. C. White's letter of December 13, 1888, to Holser, we pick up the reference to the problem:

I am glad to hear what you say about the continued demand for the *Life of Christ*. I am sorry it is receiving adverse criticism from the newspapers, for although your sales seem to continue, I fear this will be against other works which you may print.

At a late meeting of the book committee a vote was passed requesting that this book be revised, leaving out those portions which strike the new reader as flights of the author's imagination, and unsustained by Scripture—and fit it to be used as a pioneer work. You may say we are two years too late for this, but I suppose there are very large sections of Germany and France, besides the

colonies and the islands of the sea, that have not been canvassed as yet.—D WCW, p. 60.

The extra-scriptural materials introduced by Ellen White as the result of the views given her in vision on the life of Christ were at the seat of the problem. White alluded to this in a letter written to E. W. Whitney in Europe on December 13, 1888.

The book committee recommends that the *Life of Christ* shall be revised, adapting it for use as a pioneer book and removing those things which create so many queries with the new reader.— Ibid., 59.

These points had a bearing in the preparation of *Patriarchs and Prophets* and would be kept in mind a decade later in the preparation of *The Desire of Ages*.

Life Sketches of James and Ellen G. White

One of the last tasks in which James White was involved was the preparation of the manuscript for a volume published in 1880 titled *Life Sketches*. It contained the story of James White's life and that of Ellen G. White. Actually it was made up largely of materials published earlier, *Life Incidents* (1868) for James White, and *Spiritual Gifts*, Volume II (1860), for Ellen White. The 416-page *Life Sketches* was well received and had a good circulation.

James White had intended in time to revise and enlarge it, but his death prevented this. As the volume went out of print in the mid-1880s, some study was given to its revision, bringing it up to date. As J. H. Waggoner, a lifelong editor who joined the ranks of Adventists in 1852, became available, W. C. White contacted him in late 1886 or early in 1887 with the hope that he could take hold of the book and perfect it and bring it up to date. Waggoner agreed to this, and soon after joining the workforce in Basel in early 1887, he began the work that eventually yielded the manuscript for the 1888 edition of *Life Sketches of James and Ellen White*.

Testimonies for the Church,

[446] Just before Ellen White left for Europe in 1885, three of the four seven-hundred-page volumes of *Testimonies for the Church*, reprinted from the early pamphlets, came from the press. Shortly thereafter, volume 4 finished out the republication. *Testimony* No. 31, a 244-page book, was published in 1882, and No. 32, with its 238 pages, followed in 1885. After the Minneapolis General Conference session Ellen White in 1889 brought out No 33, with 288 pages.

Later in the year 1889, *Testimonies* 31, 32, and 33 were published in a single volume, *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 5.

Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene

In the early 1870s James and Ellen White had come to the rescue of the *Health Reformer*, the monthly health journal issued by Seventh-day Adventists, which was suffering a serious decline. In it, over a period of several years, James White published editorials on Bible hygiene. At the special session of the General Conference in the spring of 1876, he proposed preparing the manuscript for a book on the subject ([Ibid., April 6, 1876](#)). The General Conference gave hearty support to this, but other tasks and then his death intervened.

The idea, however, did not die, but found fruition in a volume issued in 1890, titled *Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*. Nine chapters from James White's pen filled the last section of the book, "Bible Hygiene." The first part of the volume, "Christian Temperance," was a compilation of a broad spectrum of E. G. White materials on the subject of "Health and the Home"—nineteen chapters in all.

Dr. J. H. Kellogg was drawn in to assist in the compilation of this volume. In the preface, which he wrote, he paid high tribute to the major contribution to the world made by Ellen White in leading out in health teachings. Dr. Kellogg stated that up to that time, "nowhere, and by no one, was there presented a systematic and harmonious body of hygienic truths, free from patent errors, and consistent with the Bible and the principles of the Christian religion."—[Page iii](#).

He wrote of the enduring nature of the principles she set forth. His closing paragraphs give the history of the book:

This book is not a new presentation of the principles referred to in the above paragraphs, but is simply a compilation, and in some sense an abstract, of the various writings of Mrs. White upon this subject, to which have been added several articles by Elder James White, elucidating the same principles, and the personal experience of Elder J. N. Andrews and Joseph Bates, two of the pioneers in the health movement among Seventh-day Adventists. The work of compilation has been done under the supervision of Mrs. White, by a committee appointed by her for the purpose, and the manuscript has been carefully examined by her.

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The purpose in the preparation of this volume has been to gather together, in a condensed form, writings which were scattered through various volumes, and some that have never before appeared in print, so that the teachings of Mrs. White upon this subject might reach as large a number as possible of those for whom they were specially intended; and it is confidently believed that the work will receive a cordial reception, and the earnest consideration which its importance demands.—*Ibid.*, iv.

Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene, with Ellen White's consent, was published in Battle Creek by the Good Health Publishing Company. For a number of years it was the standard E. G. White presentation on health. The "Christian Temperance" portion of the book—the E. G. White section—was in whole or in part issued in several of the languages of Europe. In 1905 *The Ministry of Healing* took its place as the prime E. G. White book on health written for the church and the world—a book for which no revision has ever been called.

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Chapter 34—(1889-1890) The 1889 General Conference Session and Beyond

The General Conference session of 1889 was held in Battle Creek from October 18 to November 11. Ellen White joyfully reported that the “spirit that was in the meeting at Minneapolis” was absent and “there seems to be no dissension.”—[Manuscript 10, 1889](#); [Letter 76, 1889](#). Still it smoldered in the hearts of some, principally those who composed the hard core of dissenters in Battle Creek. This she was to continue to meet through much of 1890 and into 1891.

The five-thirty and the eight o’clock morning meetings of the session were given to devotions and Bible study. The rest of each day was crowded full with the regular business, which included the auxiliary meetings relating to the Sabbath school, publishing, medical missionary work, et cetera. These business matters stretched two days beyond the anticipated closing time.

Among the items considered was the means by which to reach the South Sea Islands with the Seventh-day Adventist message. Action was taken to buy or build a ship and have it ready for service early in 1890. This culminated in the *Pitcairn*, a one-hundred-foot schooner built at Benicia, California, at a cost of a little less than \$12,000 and launched at high tide Monday night, July 28, 1890. It set sail from Oakland, Monday afternoon, October 20, on its first voyage, with supplies for two years’ travel. In addition to officers and crew, it carried a missionary force of six, three men and their wives.

[449] Nothing up to this time had done so much to stir Seventh-day Adventists with a missionary spirit as the building and sailing of the *Pitcairn*, which was to make six trips from American shores to the island fields before it was sold in 1900. By that time, commercial transportation met most of the needs.

Another action of special note was the adoption of a constitution for the National Religious Liberty Association, formed in Battle Creek on July 21, 1889. The pressure on Congress to adopt a national Sunday law brought the question of religious liberty prominently to

the front. Both the *Review and Herald* and the *Signs of the Times*, through much of 1888 and 1889, carried articles in nearly every issue relating to the steps being taken and the perils of religious legislation.

Consolidation of Denominational Interests

Just at the close of the conference session a committee on the consolidation of Seventh-day Adventist institutions rendered its report. The committee's recommendations seemed prudent and wise, but they evinced a forgetfulness of counsels given fourteen years earlier, and they ushered in a situation concerning which Ellen White was to have much to say in the succeeding decade. The recommendations adopted in part read:

Your committee appointed to take into consideration the publishing interests of the denomination have carefully considered this subject; and in order to meet the increasing demand of our work, and to avoid all sectional feeling and personal interests which are now liable to arise from the present plan of conducting our business by having separate organizations, and also to unify the work and secure the more hearty cooperation of all, would respectfully recommend—

1. That steps be taken at once to form a corporation for the purpose of taking entire control of all our publishing interests, thus bringing the work under one general management.

2. That the officers of this association be a board of twenty-one trustees, to be elected by the General Conference, with power to organize themselves....

The objects of this new organization shall be: 1. To hold the title of all our denominational publishing houses and the equipments thereof.

2. To own, publish, and control the sale of all denominational books, tracts, and periodicals.

3. To secure, as far as possible, by purchase or otherwise, the plates and copyrights of all denominational

books now published by our different publishing houses, or that may be written in the future.

4. To encourage the preparation of books, pamphlets, and tracts upon the different points of our faith.

5. To appoint editors and managers to take a general supervision of the work of the various offices.—[The General Conference Bulletin, 1889, 149.](#)

One paragraph indicated the haste that seemed desirable in this matter, and another showed the intent of moving into the consolidation of other lines of denominational work:

In order that no time may be lost, your committee would further recommend that a standing committee of twenty-one be elected by the General Conference at its present session to take this whole question into consideration, with power to act. We would also suggest that the very best legal advice be consulted in bringing this new organization into existence.

Your committee would further recommend that a similar organization be effected for the purpose of controlling all our educational interests, and owning the property—thus bringing them under one general management. Also, another to control our health institutions.—[Ibid.](#)

Overlooked were earlier counsels concerning the perils of consolidating publishing interests; the men conducting the work of the church apparently had forgotten or were uninformed concerning this bit of history. As far back as the middle 1870s, the Lord, through Ellen White, counseled against drawing publishing interests together under one management. Writing of this to O.A. Olsen in 1896, she stated that “twenty years ago” she had been shown that the publishing house on the Pacific Coast “was ever to remain independent of all other institutions; that it was to be controlled by no other institution.” She went on to say:

Just prior to my husband’s death [1881], the minds of some were agitated in regard to placing these in-

stitutions under one presiding power. Again the Holy Spirit brought to my mind what had been stated to me by the Lord. I told my husband to say in answer to this proposition that the Lord had not planned any such action.—[Letter 81, 1896](#).

From time to time Ellen White was to address herself to the question of confederation and consolidation, elaborating in some detail the principles involved as she pointed out the perils that lurked in moves in this direction. Not alone in the interests of unity and finance were the guarding counsels given in the mid-1890s. This was stressed in the following words of admonition:

As the work increases, there will be a great and living interest to be managed by human instrumentalities. The work is not to be centered in any one place, not even in Battle Creek.

Human wisdom argues that it is more convenient to build up interests where they have already obtained character and influence. Mistakes have been made in this line. *Individuality and personal responsibility are thus repressed and weakened*. The work is the Lord's, and the strength and efficiency are not all to be centered in any one place.—[Letter 71, 1894](#). (Italics supplied.)

Opening the Way for the Enemy to Control

Perhaps the most important point of peril, that of one-man control, was emphasized in counsel published in 1902:

At times it has been urged that the interests of the cause would be furthered by a consolidation of our publishing houses, bringing them virtually under one management. But this, the Lord has shown, should not be. It is not His plan to centralize power in the hands of a few persons or to bring one institution under the control of another....

When so great power is placed in the hands of a few persons, Satan will make determined efforts to pervert

the judgment, to insinuate wrong principles of action, to bring in a wrong policy; in so doing he cannot only pervert one institution, but through this can gain control of others and give a wrong mold to the work in distant parts. Thus the influence for evil becomes widespread....

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Should one institution adopt a wrong policy, let not another institution be corrupted. Let it stand true to the principles that were expressed in its establishment.—[Testimonies for the Church, 7:171-173](#). (Italics supplied.)

Much of this was to appear in warnings as the steps toward consolidation were pursued. It may not have stood out so clearly to Ellen White in 1889 and in 1891, but as the plans for consolidating publishing interests developed, she had no encouragement even then to give for such steps.

Reading and Working in Battle Creek

At the time of the General Conference session of 1889, Ellen White was residing in Battle Creek. This was quite contrary to her anticipation when she left California in early October, 1888, to attend the session in Minneapolis. It will be recalled that in a letter written on the last day of the meeting she had indicated some uncertainty about the plans for the immediate future.

She soon discerned that she could not leave Battle Creek in the near future. She stayed at the Sanitarium for four months and then, sensing no early release, moved into a nearby home.

Whether it was this same house that she was living in in July is not known today, but her residence at that time has been identified as 303 West Main Street. It was described by one who was at that time a member of her office family as a long office building that extended to the street. Her room was the “front room on the second floor” (DF 107b, Edna K. Steele to A. L. White, August 11, 1946). This will give us some orientation for Ellen White’s description of the home situation as she wrote to her daughter-in-law, Mary, in mid-July, 1889:

Sister Uriah Smith has just called on me for the first time. We had a good social visit. I was pleased to show her all through both houses, the working rooms above the office, six in number, and the new-made house proper where the cooking is done and the family meet. She thought everything was so healthy and convenient that there could not be such a place found even in the grand houses in Battle Creek....

Sara [McEnterfer] has just brought from the office [in the publishing house] my pictures which have hung there for years—more than eight years. One large one, of Christ blessing little children, has not been found.... Father gave it to me just before he died. Well, we shall get everything together before long and shall keep a place here where we can call it home.

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Everyone who comes into my room any time of the day exclaims, “Why, how nice and cool you are here.” I feel very thankful for this home here in Battle Creek, for I never expected so good a home....

Now is the golden opportunity for me to get out my books, and I shall try to make the most of it. We are within a few steps of the office. No delays to annoy us by copy passing through the mails. Here proof can be passed in without any delay of time.—[Letter 72, 1889](#).

So with Battle Creek as her headquarters, she pressed on with her book preparation as she could. Yet she traveled out to conferences and general meetings and to the nearby churches. As 1890 dawned she was still residing in Battle Creek, deeply involved in her work. She was keeping “four workers busy on different kinds of books.” She added, “This with my much letter writing seems to keep me employed from 3:00 A.M. till 7:00 P.M.”—[Letter 35, 1890](#).

Schools for Ministers

In late February and early March, 1890, she was drawn into a twenty-week-long ministerial institute. Professor W. W. Prescott of the college led out but the work was quite independent of the college.

Dan T. Jones, secretary of the General Conference, in rendering a report just at its close in late March, 1890, explained:

For some time our leading brethren have felt that the time had come when something more must be done for the education of workers. The growth of the work, and the way it is reaching out to the different nations and languages, seemed to make this a necessity. Accordingly, at the meeting of the General Conference Committee, held last July, the matter was carefully considered, and it was decided to have a Bible school for ministers.... The Bible school was held in the east vestry of the Tabernacle.—[The Review and Herald, April 1, 1890.](#)

[454] O. A. Olsen reported that about fifty were in the Bible school. A. T. Jones taught Bible and history the first two-month term; Uriah Smith and Dr. E. J. Waggoner conducted the Bible classes during the second three-month term. Waggoner also taught church history and Hebrew. Professor McKee gave instruction in civil government a portion of the time. W. A. Colcord, with some members of the *Review* editorial staff, taught English and rhetoric ([Ibid.](#)). The first hour of each day was devoted to the spiritual interests of the students. Dan Jones reported:

These meetings were of especial interest the last few weeks of the term. Elder Olsen took charge of them, and Sister White attended many of the meetings, and bore her testimony with much freedom and power.

The restraint which had existed on the part of some connected with the school was removed by explanations that were made, and a tender spirit came in. The subjects of faith and the love of God were largely dwelt upon, greatly to the encouragement of all present.—[Ibid.](#)

Early-Morning Devotionals Drew Large Attendance

These devotional meetings, held during the last month of the school by Olsen and Ellen White, drew in an ever-increasing attendance. Dan Jones reported:

As the news of the good meetings went out, many came in from the Battle Creek church, the office, the college, and the Sanitarium, till the east vestry of the Tabernacle, which will seat about three hundred, was filled to overflowing each morning. The interest was such that the meetings were often permitted to continue for two hours.

All were greatly benefited, and many who had been cold and formal in their work in the past received such an experience in the things of God as to give them new courage and hope for the future.—[Ibid.](#)

The letters Ellen White wrote during this month testify that the spirit of Minneapolis was from time to time exhibited in Battle Creek. She applied herself to meeting the situation among the ministers in the Bible school and some of those who came in for the devotional meetings. Sabbath morning, March 1, she spoke at the worship hour in the Tabernacle, her subject being “Christ’s Riding Into Jerusalem.” “It made a solemn impression,” she reported in a letter to Willie. “In the afternoon I spoke about one hour, and I said just as straight things as God ever gave me to speak.”—[Letter 80, 1890](#). There was a heartening response. “From this time I went into the morning meetings,” and thus began an intense effort, carried on from day to day ([Ibid.](#)). In her letter begun on Friday, March 7, she described some of the situations rather vividly:

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Ellen White’s Bold Testimony Bears Fruit

[Monday] morning [March 3], I saw, as I was making an illustration, very pointed, [Elder] Larson had on a broad grin. I said, “What is it, Brother Larson? Have I spoken anything that is improper?” I asked twice the

reason of such demonstrations. He finally said it was because he appreciated the illustration.

“Very well,” I said. “If it fits you, take it, and I hope all will do this.”

Next morning he was not present. Wednesday, Thursday, he was present. The Lord gave me great clearness and power in speaking. What was my surprise to receive a letter from Larson in which he asks me to set him right before the people because of my sharp rebuke—that is, confess I had wronged him.

This matter sank my heart like lead. What to say to these men, how to treat their strong spirits, was a difficult problem to solve. I knew not what to do. I knew that the Lord urged me to give the testimony that I did.... There seems to be now many getting the blessing of faith and freedom.

I called Brother Olds’s name and gave him a pointed testimony. He confessed Sabbath afternoon. This morning he talked very humble and broken. Brother Brighthouse said he never was so blessed in his life as he has been within a few days.

Brother Warren reveals the blessing of God in his face, for he looks as if the Sun of Righteousness was beaming upon him. He bore a testimony. He never felt the blessing of God in this way before.

[456] Brother Fero has humbled his heart and he says he is free in the Lord and wonderfully blessed.

Brother Watt talked again this morning and he says he is gaining a deep and rich experience in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He seems to be altogether a different man, and many whose names I do not know are coming into the light. Oh, I hope and pray that this work may move forward in great power. We must have the blessing of God, deep and rich and full.

Brother Olsen stands well, firm and free and boldly on the right side.

What course Dan Jones may take now and what course Porter and Larson will take, who have been so actively engaged in sowing their unbelief and prejudice, I cannot imagine. I hope they will be born again.—[Ibid.](#)

With the break she was now witnessing, she felt that she need no longer be restrained because of the reluctance of some to receive her message. “I am free,” she wrote, “and I talk as the Spirit of God giveth me utterance, and the word spoken is thankfully received by the largest number.” She continued:

These men that have held things now have no power. There is a strong current setting heavenward, and if we wait on the Lord we will surely see of His salvation.—[Ibid.](#), 4.

J. W. Watt, in a letter of confession, told of how he came “full of opposition to the meeting,” but he accepted her testimony to him and was eager to confess to Waggoner and to the class at the first opportunity. “I am sure the Spirit of the Lord is at work. What the strong spirits will do,” she wrote, “I cannot tell,” and then added:

Larson called to see me a few minutes ago. I was altogether too busy to see him. What he wanted to say I know not, but I feel that they want to get me to say something they can make a handle of, and I want to be wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove.—[Ibid.](#)

The Backbone of Rebellion Broken

Ellen White laid her unfinished letter aside, but picked it up again on Tuesday, March 11, and gave a description of the happenings of the intervening four days:

Dear children, my heart is filled with praise and thanksgiving to God. The Lord has poured upon us His blessing. The backbone of the rebellion is broken in

those who came in from other places. This morning the room was full. We first had prayer, then Brother Olsen spoke. I followed in the same line I had been laboring since one week ago last Sabbath. The Lord puts words in my mouth to speak....

Elder Waggoner spoke very humbly. Brother Steward spoke with much feeling and in humility. Brother Fero spoke well. Brother Larson then spoke and confessed to me, confessed his feelings had not been right. I responded and he took his position on the testimonies.

Brother Porter was on his feet all broken up, so he could say nothing for a few moments, then he said [that] when I spoke to him personally before those assembled in the office chapel, he rose up against it, but he felt now it was just what he needed and he thanked the Lord for the reproof. He confessed to me his wrong that he had done to me and Elder Waggoner; [he] humbly asked us to forgive him.... Said he had been disbelieving the testimonies, but he said, "I believe them now. God has been speaking to us through Sister White this morning. I believe every word. I accept the testimonies from God. I take my stand upon them."—*Ibid.*

She mentioned the names of others and their reactions. The following quotation continues the picture of the moving situation:

Brother Dan Jones was present. He kept his head bowed upon the seat all the time. Did not lift it up once till the meeting closed.... Captain Eldridge was present. The whole room was sobbing and praising God, for there was the revealing of His power. He drew graciously near.

I hear nothing of Elder Smith, but we hope the gracious influence of the spirit of God may rest upon him, and he will find his way out of the darkness. But we feel full of hope and courage that these men, strong and high-headed, have begun to feel that they are working against the Spirit of God....

Brother Prescott talked well, and plainly told them God had spoken to us this morning through Sister White. “Let us,” he said, “take heed to these words.” He wept like a baby when Brother Larson and Porter were on their feet talking. Brother Olsen is so glad and relieved. He scarcely knows what to do with himself. Brother Waggoner feels so thankful.—[Ibid.](#)

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The Spirit of Prophecy the Real Issue

The next day Ellen White, seeing clearly that they were in a time when decisions were being made, “called a meeting,” as she said, “of the prominent ones, Elders U. Smith, Leon Smith, Olsen, Fero, Watt, Prescott, Waggoner, McCoy, Larson, Porter, Colcord, Ballenger, Webber, Dan Jones, Wakeham, G. Amadon, Eldridge, Breed, and Prof. Miller” ([Letter 83, 1890](#)). By this time it was clear that the real issue was the reliability of the testimonies and the basis of her writing. On Monday, March 10, she had responded to a letter of inquiry from Elder Colcord in which she made a soul-revealing statement about her call and work:

Your question I will answer as best I can. I take no credit of ability in myself to write the articles in the paper or to write the books which I publish. Certainly I could not originate them. I have been receiving light for the last forty-five years and I have been communicating the light given me of heaven to our people as well as to all whom I could reach. I am seeking to do the will of my heavenly Father.

I have never passed through such a scene of conflict, such determined resistance to the truth—the light that God has been pleased to give me—as since the Minneapolis meeting.

I have again and again felt that I must make a decided move out of this determined opposing element, but every time the Lord has made known to me [that] I must stand at my post of duty and [that] He would stand by me.

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This has been the hardest long and persistent resistance I have ever had. There is now a settled purpose with me to write my experience in full as soon as I can get the time to do so, that these events shall be recorded as they have occurred. [Ellen White's determination to write out fully the story of just what happened is reflected in the lengthy letters to W. C. White and to Mary, which she anticipated would form the basis of the documentation of the history that was transpiring.] *Thank God that victory has come.*—[Letter 60, 1890](#). (Italics supplied.)

A Statement Clarifying Issues

Now at this Wednesday morning meeting she asked E. J. Waggoner to make a statement reviewing certain facts, which she hoped would offer some explanations that would help the brethren. After that, the floor was opened for questions. Reporting the meeting, she explained in a letter to Willie and Mary:

It was finally simmered down to this—that [in 1888] a letter had come to [Battle Creek] from California to Brother Butler, telling them [the brethren in Battle Creek] that plans were all made to drive the law in Galatians. This was met and explained, that there were no plans laid. You can see how these explanations must have looked to those present.—[Letter 83, 1890](#).

The questions referred to an incident that took place in California prior to the institute in Minneapolis. This was recounted by A. T. Jones some years later:

Some time before starting to that institute, C. H. Jones, general manager of the Pacific Press, W. C. White, and some others asked Brother Waggoner and me to go with them for a few days' outing and ...study together the Scriptures on these "heretical" questions that were certain to come up.... Wind of this little innocent thing wafted to the brethren in Battle Creek as

further confirmation of their settled view that Brother Waggoner and I in furtherance of our scheme to revolutionize the doctrine of the denomination were working other brethren into our scheme so as to come to the institute and General Conference at Minneapolis so strongly fortified as to carry our scheme. We did not know till after the institute and conference were all over that the General Conference men in Battle Creek held these things concerning us.... And so in all innocence we came to the meeting expecting just nothing but plain Bible study to know the truth.—DF 53, A. T. Jones to C. E. Holmes, May 12, 1921.

On the next Sunday, March 16, Ellen White carried the account of the Wednesday meeting further:

I have learned that the meeting we held last Wednesday was very much a success. I think those who have made so much out of so very little were much surprised at the outcome or showing up of the matter by E. J. Waggoner and myself.—[Letter 83, 1890](#).

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Ellen White then wrote of a meeting Sabbath afternoon in the publishing house chapel, called by Olsen. She told of it:

I spoke three times—very short twice, once a little longer. Elder Olsen talked well. He has been giving excellent talks. They are right to the point.... Brother Eldridge spoke of the meeting held a few days before, to investigate some things, as being excellent. He said that it was thought they had something to fight, but it was only a man of straw. He was relieved, for he was happily disappointed. Larson spoke well. Brother Porter spoke, but not as clearly and to the point as we might have expected. Oh, how hard for these men to die!

Brother Dan Jones then spoke. He stated that he had been tempted to give up the testimonies; but if he did this, he knew he should yield everything, for we had

regarded the testimonies as interwoven with the third angel's message; and he spoke of the terrible scene of temptations. I really pitied the man.—*Ibid.*

What is the Evidence?

At this meeting Ellen White challenged the men to look at the evidence that had been before them all down through the years as to the integrity of her work, and particularly since the Minneapolis meeting. She referred to the test Christ had given, "By their fruits ye shall know them," and urged that candid consideration be given to the evidence. She declared:

I am convinced that Satan saw that there was very much at stake here, and he did not want to lose his hold on our ministering brethren. And if the full victory comes, there will go forth from this meeting many ministers with an experience of the highest value.—*Ibid.*

A second meeting of inquiry was held on the next Wednesday morning, with A. T. Jones present. He had not been with them the week before. Of this meeting she wrote:

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Brother Jones talked very plainly, yet tenderly in regard to their crediting hearsay and not, in brotherly love, taking the matter to the one talked about and asking him if the report were true.

Willie, I talked as they had never heard me talk before.... *The whole atmosphere has changed.* There is now joy with Brother Dan Jones that I held to the point. He says he has made a fool of himself. Brother Eldridge says he feels subdued, like a whipped man, that all this maneuvering has been going on to meet obstacles that never had an existence....

Brother Dan Jones says it would have been lamentable [for the men] to leave Battle Creek without these two special meetings and the definite explanations made. He is a changed man. The Lord is at

work. How Brother Smith will come out remains to be seen.—[Letter 84, 1890](#). (Italics supplied.)

When asked why the meetings at which explanations were given were not held earlier, Ellen White replied:

The state of their impressions and feelings was of such a character that we could not reach them, for they had ears, but they were dull of hearing; hearts had they, but they were hard and unimpressible.—[Ibid.](#)

A few days before the Bible school closed, Ellen White left to spend a weekend in Chicago. From there she went to Colorado, where Mary was now in rapidly failing health, then on to California to spend much of April and May. Following a camp meeting at Fresno, she divided her time between Oakland and St. Helena.

Leaving California in early June, she stopped again in Colorado en route to Battle Creek. It was clear Mary would not live long. Tuberculosis had done its devastating work. Willie was with her. On Wednesday, June 18, Mary's life came to a close. She was 33 years of age and left a grieving husband three years her senior, and two daughters, 8 and 3 years of age. Her life had been a fruitful one, not only as a wife and mother but as a writer, editor, and publishing house worker. The funeral was held in the Battle Creek Tabernacle on Wednesday, June 25, and she was laid to rest in the White family plot in the Oak Hill Cemetery.

Ellen White was exhausted and needed a period of relaxation. This she sought in mid-July in Petoskey, some two hundred miles to the north on Lake Michigan, a popular summer resort area. Several Adventist families resided there or were there for the summer.

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Soon she was planning for a few camp meetings and then a swing through the East and South, laboring in the newly organized Atlantic Conference and taking in New York City, Long Island, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. The tour would also include work in Virginia and an appointment at Salamanca, New York, on the New York-Pennsylvania border. Ellen White's two-month stay in Petoskey extended to mid-September, and then she was back in Battle Creek for a month before starting on the three-month tour through the East and South.

[463] **Chapter 35—(1890-1891) Five Months of Arduous
Labor Yields Fruit**

A back-page note in the *Review and Herald* of September 16, signed by the president of the General Conference, O. A. Olsen, informed the field of the plans that would involve Ellen White through the last months of 1890:

Elder W. C. White, Sister White, and Brother Chadwick will attend important meetings in District No. 1, viz., the annual meetings of the conference, and Tract and Missionary Society of the New England Conference; the same in the Atlantic Conference; the State meeting in Pennsylvania, and the Virginia Conference.—[The Review and Herald, September 16, 1890.](#)

Another notice on the same page gave dates. The schedule called for Ellen White and Sara McEnterfer, together with W. C. White, to leave Battle Creek on Thursday, evening, October 9, in order to fill appointments beginning at Adams Center, New York.

When she left Battle Creek she was not sure that she would be strong enough to move into a regular speaking program, going from one State meeting to another. But at Adams Center she soon discovered that with reasonable caution she could. So she usually spoke once each day of the week-long meetings. From Adams Center she hastened on to South Lancaster, Massachusetts.

Along with Sara and Willie, she was in South Lancaster for two weeks. Meetings were held at the church and with the students at the academy. Frequently she spoke to the delegates at this State meeting at the early-morning devotional and then another time during the day or in the evening.

At Salamanca, New York

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The Pennsylvania State meeting, scheduled from Wednesday, October 29, to Tuesday, November 4, was actually held at Salamanca, New York, just above the Pennsylvania-New York State line. The travel to Salamanca by Ellen White and her party called for an overnight stop in New York City, where they were to stay at the mission. It was ten o'clock Wednesday night when they got to the city, and they took the elevated railway to the mission home. Ellen White had a cold caught on the trip from Boston by boat. Wrestling that night with the ascents and descents and waiting here and there in disagreeable currents of air led to an exposure that took its toll. When the traveling party arrived at Salamanca at eleven o'clock on Thursday night, Ellen White was "sick, tired, and nervous" ([Manuscript 44, 1890](#)). They had traveled in the rain all day, but at Salamanca the ground was covered with snow. Ellen White was to be entertained in the home of Brother Hicks, and it was he who met them at the railroad depot. Ellen White described the home situation:

Friday morning, October 31: We were introduced to Brother Hicks's mother, a kindly looking lady, not a Sabbathkeeper, and not opposed. Brother Hicks's wife is in the insane asylum in consequence of a fall sixteen years before, striking upon the back of her head. They have a son 15 years old, a quiet lad. He does not make any profession of religion.

Brother Hicks is employed to oversee the working force on the railroad, receiving \$1,500 per year. He embraced the Sabbath and sent in his resignation, but the president of the road did not accept it, so he has continued to keep the Sabbath and do his work.—[Ibid.](#)

The meetings were being held in a rented church nearby. Ellen White was scheduled to take the Sabbath morning service, but that morning she wrote in her diary: "The cold is very severe upon me. I shall attempt to speak, but it will be with difficulty." Her diary entry mentions the strengthening blessing of the Lord and her topic:

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The Lord did indeed help and strengthen and bless me in speaking to the people, dwelling largely upon the necessity of faith and love for one another as followers of Christ, which has been almost extinct in our churches. The words spoken were heartily received.—[Ibid.](#)

Sunday the meeting was to be held in the opera house, for the rented church was being used by its own congregation. Ellen White had been advertised as the speaker, and quite a large attendance of the townspeople was expected. As the time of the meeting approached it seemed it would be impossible for her to fill the appointment, but she insisted that she would, declaring, “I have a message for the people.”—DF 1076, A. T. Robinson account. The hall was filled with expectant listeners. After the opening exercises, W. C. White and A. T. Robinson assisted her to the podium, and “she spoke for more than an hour, with most wonderful power” on the subject of temperance ([Ibid.](#)).

After the meeting she was assisted back to her room in the Hicks home. She was due to speak again the next afternoon. She wrote of her experience:

I had an appointment Monday afternoon and I tried to fill it. My head was suffering, my ears could scarcely hear my own voice, yet the Lord helped me, else I could not possibly have spoken. I could scarcely stand upon my feet, but I felt the sustaining power of God upon me. I dwelt again upon the necessity of faith, the necessity of loving God supremely and our neighbor as ourselves.

I could not tell the words I spoke, but many said, “The power of God was upon you. The words came to us as wonderful inspiration.”

I knew that the words of the Lord Jesus had come to the people. Many spoke of the help they received from the words spoken. I told them to render no thanks to me. God and He alone should have the praise. I was only an instrument in His hands.—[Manuscript 44, 1890.](#)

After her meeting she was detained by a sister in the faith who was greatly opposed by her husband, and listened for an hour to

her tale of woe. Weary and in much discomfort, she made her way to the Hicks home. As she went to her room she was pondering the seeming impossibility of continuing through November to meet the appointments made for her. Considering the time of year and her situation, she felt she would have to follow Sara McEnterfer's [466] insistent counsel and return to Battle Creek where she could have proper care. She knew the disappointment this would bring, first to church leaders who had arranged for the meetings, and then to church members in areas she had not before visited. She recorded in her diary what took place:

I knelt by my chair to pray, feeling disheartened in reference to my journeying. Many appointments were before me. I had not uttered a word when the whole room seemed filled with a soft, silvery light, and my pain and disappointment and discouragement were removed. I was filled with comfort and hope and the peace of Christ. "My peace I give unto you." I know it was upon me. The presence of Jesus was in the room. [Genesis 28:12-15](#). I could better understand the meaning of these words. And Jacob said, "Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not." ...

Indeed, heaven seemed very near to me, and my heart well filled with joy and gladness. I had no inclination to sleep. I wanted to feast upon the heavenly manna, that Bread of Life that if we eat thereof, we shall live forever. What a night that was to my soul!—[Ibid.](#)

Then in vision many matters relating to the publishing work were opened up to her. In the morning she did not have an opportunity to write of what was revealed to her in the vision. In the brief entry under the dateline of November 4, she wrote: "I longed to be where I could write out the things that were opened to me the past night."—[Ibid.](#) But she had other things to do, and this must wait. She left a blank space in her diary that she might come back to this when there was opportunity.

The next appointments were in Virginia, but W. C. White and A. T. Robinson had given up hope of Ellen White doing

anything but returning to Battle Creek, where she could make a recovery. Robinson, the supervisor of district one, where they were now laboring, wrote of the events that occurred early on Tuesday:

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The next morning Elder White and I were summoned to her room, which we approached with no little anxiety. When we entered her room, Sister White arose and met us, her face beaming with joy and happiness.

She quickly told us of an experience the evening before. As she knelt beside her bed before retiring, she feared she would not have strength to rise again. As she was pleading with God, an angel appeared, standing at the foot of her bed. The angel said, "Satan is your destroyer, but I am your Restorer."...

After relating that much of the experience of the evening before, she said, "There were some things presented to me last night concerning the work in Battle Creek that I wish to relate to you brethren." She then began to talk about the remainder of our journey, and the matter that she had said she wanted to relate to us seemed to have passed out of her mind.—DF 107b, A. T. Robinson statement.

Although she could not call to mind what she wanted to relate to the men, she wrote out portions of the revelation in her diary-journal as she had opportunity. In the space left at the end of her 1890 diary, she wrote:

I had a very marked experience which I hope never to forget. Through the night season I was in communion with God. I was taken out and away from myself, and was in different states and assemblies, bearing a decided testimony of reproof and warning.

I was in Battle Creek, and in a council assembled there were ministers and responsible men from the Review office. There were sentiments advanced and with no very gentle spirit urged to be adopted, which filled me with surprise and apprehension and distress.... They

[those assembled] were not spiritual, could not discern the devices of Satan, and were ignorant in a large degree of his workings. They would adopt plans which appeared wise, but Satan was the instigator of these measures. If these men had the molding of the work, God would be dishonored.—[Manuscript 44, 1890](#).

Elsewhere in the diary-journal (a bound book of blank pages) she came back to the vision several times as opportunity afforded. But the fuller description of the many lines of instruction given to her she was unable to write until returning home to Battle Creek.

On to Virginia

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Having been completely healed, she was ready to proceed to Virginia and with others took the train Tuesday morning at 11:00 A.M. She spent a few days in Sands (now Stanley), Virginia, relaxing before the meetings began. She took occasion to visit one of the caverns that abound in that region. Her diary for Thursday, November 6, tells the story:

Brother Robinson, Sara McEnterfer, Willie White, and I were accommodated to Brother Lewis taking us with his horses and carriage about eight miles to Luray to see the caverns. We went into a building and for \$1 each we were furnished a guide, and I was astonished at what my eyes beheld. To give a description of this scene is simply impossible. It was wonderful, too wonderful to describe.

We spent one hour and a half, with electric lights and lanterns or a tin with candles, three in each tin. We rode back, taking our dinner as we rode back to our stopping place at Sands. The road was quite rough, but we enjoyed the ride very much. The day was mild, the sun shone in clearness, and the scenery was good. I was glad for this privilege to ride. It did us all good.—[Manuscript 45, 1890](#).

Meetings started in the house of worship Friday morning, and Ellen White filled her usual place, often speaking at the early-morning meetings, and at other meetings as occasion seemed to indicate. Sunday night, November 9, she received another vision, then on November 12 the worker group started north for the meetings of the Atlantic Conference, held in Brooklyn, New York.

She wrote in her diary: “I think not best to attend morning meetings. I am urged by the Spirit of the Lord to write important matters in reference to the work of God for this time.”

Several Visions Relating to the Publishing Work

[469] It seems that in several visions of the night at this time she was taken over the ground traversed in the vision at Salamanca earlier in the month, and much additional instruction was given to her. She referred to this here and there in her diary-journal through November and December. She filled in blank pages and half pages with her writing on what had been opened up to her concerning the publishing work and the attitudes of unconsecrated men who were carrying responsibilities in that work. Clearly the vision given at Salamanca and these subsequent visions presented a very broad spectrum of warnings and important counsels. One dramatic scene she viewed in the vision at Salamanca—the one she attempted to tell to W. C. White and A. T. Robinson right after the vision—made an indelible impression on her mind, and it was one to which she made allusions several times. She wrote of this somewhat in detail in her journal, most likely while at Brooklyn, New York:

In the night season I was present in several councils, and there I heard words repeated by influential men to the effect that if *The American Sentinel* would drop the words “Seventh-day Adventist” from its columns, and would say nothing about the Sabbath, the great men of the world would patronize it; it would become popular, and do a larger work. This looked very pleasing....

I saw their countenances brighten, and they began to work on a policy plan to make the *Sentinel* a popular success. The whole matter was introduced by men who

needed the truth in the chambers of the mind and the soul.

This policy is the first step in a succession of wrong steps. The principles which have been advocated in *The American Sentinel* are the very sum and substance of the advocacy of the Sabbath, and when men begin to talk of changing these principles, they are doing a work that it does not belong to them to do. Like Uzzah, they are attempting to steady the ark which belongs to God, and is under His special supervision.—[Manuscript 29a, 1890](#).

In January, 1891, after returning home, she spoke more fully on the overall warnings regarding the perils that threatened the publishing work. She did this in two extended statements, each carrying the key dateline, tying them in with the vision of November 3.

Following the work in Brooklyn, Ellen White filled appointments in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Washington, D.C. There she participated in the meetings through the Week of Prayer.

In Washington she was entertained in the home of J. S. Washburn, pastor of the Washington church. One day in conversation, thinking of the Minneapolis session and the discussions on righteousness by faith, Washburn asked Ellen White, “What is faith?” Her reply was prompt and simple: “You believe what your father tells you, do you not? That is faith.”—As related by J. S. Washburn to the author. To Ellen White, faith was a simple, uncomplicated experience—just trusting belief as a child would trust a father.

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Back Home at Battle Creek

With Sara, Ellen White arrived back in Battle Creek on Tuesday afternoon, December 30, 1890, at three o’clock. Soon she was introduced to encouraging news. The Week of Prayer reading she had written had been read in the Tabernacle on Sabbath, December 27, the closing day of the special event. With joy she recorded in her diary the reports that came to her:

The article I had written, published in the Extra, was read, and the power of the Spirit of the Lord sent the truth home to many hearts. No one could doubt that the Lord witnessed to the words written for the benefit of the church. Hearts were deeply stirred and remarks were made by Elder Prescott and others.

Elder Prescott confessed that he had not taken the course he should have taken in Battle Creek. He went far back to Minneapolis and acknowledged he did not have the true discernment there, and since that time he had not said much, but he had talked with Elder Smith and a few others. He made thorough work. Elder Smith stated that the testimony in the Extra was meant for him. He accepted it as reproof to him.—[Manuscript 54, 1890](#).

In gratifying response Prescott linked his arm in Smith's and they identified themselves as seeking the Lord most earnestly. The night after the encouraging word came to Ellen White she could not sleep. She wrote: "Elder Smith was before me, and my supplications went up to heaven in his behalf all night. I was in a spirit of agony wrestling with God, and great hope took possession of my soul for him. He is one of our old hands, one of our reliable men, and the Lord will give him His keeping power."—[Ibid.](#)

[471] The next day she wrote a twelve-page letter to Smith, appealing to him most earnestly to come fully into the light ([Letter 40, 1890](#)).

Feelings of Loneliness

In this letter she bared her own soul, declaring:

My brethren have trifled and caviled and criticized and commented and demerited, and picked and chosen a little and refused much until the testimonies mean nothing to them. They put whatever interpretation upon them that they choose in their own finite judgment and are satisfied. I would, if I had dared, [have] given up this field of conflict long ago, but something has held me....

But I leave all this in the hands of God. I feel cut loose from many of my brethren; they do not understand me or my mission or my work, for if they did they could never have pursued the course they have done.

I love to have the ones who feel they need help—poor, hungry, starving souls. I love to see them enjoy the precious light God has given me for them. Oh, how Jesus rejoiced when a place was found for the truth in the heart of the woman of Samaria.—[Ibid.](#)

Friday night, January 2, 1891, she spoke to a well-filled Tabernacle, giving an account of the workings of the Spirit of God in the meetings she had attended through the past three months. Sabbath morning she spoke again, taking as her text [Matthew 11:16-27](#) with its emphatic message “Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes” (verse 21). She wrote of the meeting:

I made a decided application of this lesson to those who had great light, precious opportunities, and wonderful privileges, and yet their spiritual growth and advancement was not in accordance with the blessings and light and knowledge given of God. There was a solemn impression made upon the congregation, and fully two thousand persons were present. I had great freedom in speaking.—[Letter 32, 1891.](#)

Sabbath afternoon many of the church members returned to the Tabernacle; soon they divided into four groups for testimony meetings.

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In her diary report of the work of that Sabbath she noted: “I had not an idea of saying as plain and pointed things as I did say, but the Lord spoke through the human agent. I felt pressed, and could not withhold the message given.”—[Manuscript 40, 1891.](#)

Uriah Smith Seeks a Deeper Experience

Monday, January 5, Smith came to see Ellen White. They had an earnest talk. She could see that he had a very different spirit from what he had manifested through the past two years. She wrote to Washburn:

He was not hard and unimpressible; he felt the words I spoke to him, laying before him faithfully the course he had taken, and the harm he had done through this position. He said he wanted to come into harmony with the testimonies of the Spirit of God.—[Letter 32, 1891](#).

The next day he called again and asked if she would meet with a select few, for he had something to say. She told him she would.

I had conversation with Elder Smith, more favorable than any previous talk. He seems to be desirous to come to the light. He sees that his course has not been right in some things, and this I knew he must see before he could be closely connected with God. Since the Minneapolis meeting he has been counteracting my work by his position. The light that God has given me for the church has not been fully received because of his position. His attitude has said more than words.

But after conversing with him freely, and showing him what harm he was doing to those who did not want to believe the message or receive the messenger and the counsel from God, he seemed to see more clearly the position he had occupied. He was determined to make straight paths for his feet, and to take up the stumbling blocks, that the lame may not be turned aside out of the way, but rather be healed of their weakness and inefficiency.—[Manuscript 40, 1891](#).

[473] To Washburn she told of the Wednesday meeting:

Elder Smith read the letter I had sent him, read it to them all, and said he accepted it as from the Lord.

He went back to the Minneapolis meeting and made a confession of the spirit he had occupied, casting on me very heavy burdens. Brother Rupert confessed also, and we had a very profitable, excellent meeting.

Brother Smith has fallen on the Rock, and is broken, and the Lord Jesus will now work with him. He took my hand as he left the room, and said, "If the Lord will forgive me for the sorrow and burdens I have brought upon you, I tell you this will be the last. I will stay up your hands. The testimonies of God shall hold this place in my experience." It is seldom that Elder Smith sheds a tear, but he did weep, and his voice was choked with the tears in it.—[Letter 32, 1891](#).

By interviews and letters the work of confession and reconciliation continued. Ellen White wrote, "Now you see I have reason to be glad and rejoice and praise the Lord. Professor Bell was present. Elder Smith confessed to him the wrong that he had done to him in the school trial in 1882. Oh, how glad I was to see and hear and know that these things that had barred the Spirit of God from coming into our meetings were removed."—[Ibid](#).

George I. Butler Confession

Uriah Smith was not alone in coming to see the need of making confessions and coming into the light. Among others was George I. Butler, who soon after the Minneapolis session retired in Florida. In the summer of 1893 he sent to the *Review and Herald* for publication a significant communication in which he reviewed his experience.

I fully believe that God has blessed greatly to the good of His people and the cause the greater agitation of the doctrines of justification by faith, the necessity of appropriating Christ's righteousness by faith in order to our salvation, and the civil and religious liberty principles now so much dwelt upon....

I am well satisfied that additional light of great importance has been shining upon these subjects, and fully

believe that God has greatly blessed it to the good of those who have accepted it....

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I hope never to despair, never to fall out by the way. Christ seems very precious to me, the best Friend by far I ever had. My heart burns within me many times to be able yet to bring souls to the truth. I hope yet to labor again in some humble way in His vineyard.—[The Review and Herald, June 13, 1893.](#)

Butler did labor actively again. Released from the care of his invalid wife by her death late in 1901, he was soon drawn into administrative work, first in Florida and then in the newly organized Southern Union Conference.

Others Confess and Turn About

It was in 1893 also that several other leading men repented of their attitude at Minneapolis and made confessions: Isaac Van Horn, Leroy Nicola, J. H. Morrison, and Madison Miller. It would be saying too much to declare that all of those who at one point after the Minneapolis session confessed their failure to walk in the light always held to their good intentions, but they left the ranks of opposers and were counted among those who lived and worked with an understanding of righteousness by faith.

Writing in 1899, Ellen White defined the period of particular difficulty mentioning the “confusion that came into Battle Creek from the Minneapolis meeting.” Two years of opposition were brought in, and at two General Conferences [1889, 1891], [Even though the 1891 conference was marked with positive circumstances, quite different from the 1888 meeting, some still held out in opposition.] a spirit prevailed among some of our leading men which was not inspired by God.—[Letter 183, 1899.](#)

The two men used mightily by God at Minneapolis and in the decade that followed, Waggoner and Jones, became the special point of attack of the great enemy of God and man. In time they were misled and their positive testimony was hushed. [See appendix B in *Thirteen Crisis Years* for an account of “what became of A. T. Jones

and E. J. Waggoner?"] With a seeming premonition of this, Ellen White wrote in 1892:

It is quite possible that Elder Jones or Waggoner may be overthrown by the temptations of the enemy; but if they should be, this would not prove that they had had no message from God, or that the work that they had done was all a mistake. But should this happen, how many would take this position, and enter into a fatal delusion because they are not under the control of the Spirit of God....

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I know that this is the very position many would take if either of these men were to fall, and I pray that these men upon whom God has laid the burden of a solemn work may be able to give the trumpet a certain sound, and honor God at every step, and that their path at every step may grow brighter and brighter, until the close of time.—[Letter 24, 1892](#).

In her many articles in the *Review and Herald* and *Signs of the Times*, and in her many books, Ellen White has kept that light shining. Others have joined her in this important mission.

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Chapter 36—(1890-1891) The Last Year Before Australia

For a number of years the General Conference sessions had been held annually in the late fall months. At the session of 1889, also held in the fall, the decision was made to hold the sessions every other year, in the early spring. Thursday, March 5, 1891, was set as the opening date of the next session. It would be held in the Tabernacle in Battle Creek.

The second ministerial institute preceded the session, and Ellen White was urged to meet with them when she could, in the early-morning meetings. She made it a practice to be present and speak each morning, and also gave a short address in the closing exercises of the school ([The Review and Herald, March 3, 1891](#)). Writing to workers on the Pacific Coast, she reported:

The ministerial institute was a season of close searching of the Scriptures. The doors of hearts were not barred with iron, lest rays of light should penetrate the darkened chambers of the mind, and the sanctifying power should cleanse and refine the soul temple. Right in the midst of their study, during the past winter, there have been times where there was not a question with the class but that the Comforter, the Holy Spirit of God, was doing its work.—[Letter 3, 1891](#).

The 1891 General Conference Session

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It was in this atmosphere that the General Conference session of 1891 opened, following a week-long council of conference presidents. The 102 delegates represented twenty-nine conferences and four mission fields. O. A. Olsen, president of the General Conference, gave his report as the first item of business. It was one of progress: The ministers' school had been a real success, the colleges

at Battle Creek and Healdsburg were full, South Lancaster Academy was crowded, and a new college at Lincoln, Nebraska, was under construction and would open in the fall. The Review and Herald was securing a new charter, the Pacific Press was crowded with work, and the publishing house in Norway had just added a cylinder press. The missionary ship *Pitcairn*, authorized at the previous General Conference session, had been built and had already visited the island of Pitcairn, where eighty-two were baptized and organized into a church. The *Pitcairn* was continuing its mission, visiting other islands in the South Pacific. S. N. Haskell, who had just returned from an around-the-world trip, brought thrilling reports of advances and opportunities.

Among the many items the president reported on was the progress toward consolidation of the publishing interests of the denomination, bringing them under one management and board of control. The plan looked attractive and promising.

Religious Interest at a High Point

A Bible study hour was scheduled for each day at 9:00 A.M., but a change was made, explained in the *Bulletin*:

So much interest was manifested on the part of the Battle Creek church, the students of the college, the helpers at the sanitarium, and hands in the Review office, that the time was changed to 7:00 P.M., in order to accommodate all.—[The General Conference Bulletin, 1891, 15.](#)

W. W. Prescott began on Friday morning with a study on the inspiration of the Bible. E. J. Waggoner followed with the next study, taking up the “Letter to the Romans” ([Ibid., 33](#)); he presented a total of sixteen studies on this topic.

Sabbath afternoon, March 7, Ellen White was the speaker. Uriah Smith reported of the meeting:

In the afternoon Sister White spoke on the importance of preaching the Word, and the danger of covering

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up, and keeping in the background, the distinctive features of our faith, under the impression that prejudice will thereby be avoided. If there is committed to us a special message, as we believe, that message must go, without reference to the customs or prejudices of the world, not governed by a policy of fear or favor. Some will receive it and be sanctified through it, though multitudes will oppose and reject it. But it must go everywhere till the very earth is lighted with its glory.

The discourse was a timely one, and made a profound impression upon the large congregation.—[The Review and Herald, March 10, 1891.](#)

What Smith did not mention in his report was something many in the audience noticed, which took on significance some hours later.

References to the Salamanca Vision

A. T. Robinson, who had been in Salamanca with Ellen White on November 3, made an observation on that Sabbath meeting, relative to a point that had particular significance to him:

The burden of the discourse seemed to be that we were to show our denominational colors, by being a distinct people, and letting the world know that we have a life-and-death message for this time.

Three times she attempted to tell the scene that passed before her at the Salamanca meeting; each time her mind would seem to turn in another channel. At the third reference to the Salamanca meeting, she remarked, in an almost impatient tone of voice, “But I will have more to say about that some other time.”—DF 107b, A. T. Robinson statement.

Late that Sabbath afternoon the leading ministers met in the east vestry of the Tabernacle. Ellen White was present and pleaded for deeper consecration. At the close Olsen approached her and inquired if she would be present Sunday morning at the early-morning ministers’ meeting. She replied that she had done her part and was weary,

and she would leave the burden with him. So Olsen and Prescott planned to lead out in the morning.

Edna Kilborne Steele, who at the time resided in Ellen White's home in Battle Creek, doing secretarial work for both Ellen White and W. C. White, stated that when Sara McEnterfer asked Ellen White if she would be attending the early-morning meeting, she replied that she had no intention of doing so. This put Sara at rest, and she slept late Sunday morning. All concerned knew exactly what Ellen White's intention was! She would, if she could, sleep late that Sunday morning (DF 107b). But in her diary written later that Sunday, March 8, she recorded:

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Instructed to Tell what She Saw at Salamanca

I awakened in the morning with a decided impression that I should go into the ministers' meeting, and bear the message which the Lord had given me at Salamanca, New York, in our three months' tour.—[Manuscript 19a, 1891.](#)

We turn now to the Robinson account:

Brother Ellery Robinson and I were being entertained during the conference at the home of Brother W. C. White. As we were on our way to the Tabernacle to attend the five-thirty meeting Sunday morning, passing the home of Sister White and noticing the house lighted up, Brother White remarked that he would call and see if his mother was ill.—DF 107b, A. T. Robinson statement.

He found her busily engaged in writing. "She then told him that an angel of God had wakened her about three o'clock, and had bidden her to go to the ministers' meeting and relate some things shown her at Salamanca. She said that she arose quickly, and had been writing for about two hours."—[Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 315.](#)

She proceeded with her son to the Tabernacle, where they found the meeting had opened and the ministers were engaged in a season of prayer. Olsen described her entry:

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While we were engaged in prayer, Sister White walked in with a bundle of manuscript under her arm. Her coming was entirely unexpected, and of course we all received the impression that she would have something special for us. At the close of the prayer season and singing a verse, we gave her the time. She arose and stated that she had not expected to attend this meeting, that she had told Elder Olsen the day before that having attended a number of meetings in succession, she would not come today; but that at three o'clock she had been awakened, someone taking hold of her arm and waking her up; and then she had arisen immediately, gotten ready, gathered up her matter, and had come to the meeting. She was impressed that she should present some things that had been shown her in November the year before, while she was at Salamanca, New York.—DF 107b, O. A. Olsen account, August 19, 1914.

Ellen White's Report

I went into the meeting and bore the testimony given me of God in the demonstration of the Spirit and power of God. I told them the Lord had opened before me many things.

In the night season my Guide said, "Follow Me." I was taken to a council of men, where a zeal and an earnestness were manifested, but not according to knowledge. One held up the *[American] Sentinel*, and with his hand across the paper said, "This must come out," and then made remarks entirely contrary to the principles of our faith. The particulars of this are given in my diary of 1890. The message given made a deep impression on all those present.

Brother [A. F.] Ballenger, deeply affected, arose and said, "I was in that council meeting which was held last night until a late hour, and Sister White has described it accurately. The very words she says she heard spoken were spoken last night. I was on the wrong side of

the question, and now take my position on the right side." The testimony was well wet down with tears, and humble confession.

I was greatly astonished. I thought that this meeting had been held at the time it was presented to me.—
[Manuscript 19a, 1891.](#)

In describing the meeting Robinson said, "I shall never forget the look of perplexity on the face of the dear woman, as she looked at Brother Ballenger and exclaimed, "Last night!" Others reported that she repeated in astonishment, "Last night! Last night!"

When Ballenger took his seat, Captain Eldridge stood to speak:

I was in that meeting. Last night, after the close of the conference, some of us met in my room in the Review office, where we locked ourselves in, and there took up and discussed the questions and the matter that has been presented to us this morning....

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If I should have begun to give a description of what took place, and the personal attitude of those in the room, I could not have given it as exactly and correctly as it has been given by Sister White. I now see that I was in error; that the position that I took was not correct; and from the light that has been given this morning, I acknowledge that I was wrong.—DF 107b, O. A. Olsen account.

Others who were in that meeting Saturday night spoke that Sunday morning, and the testimony of each was much the same—they were in the meeting a few hours before, and Ellen White had described what took place and what was said better than they could have done. Olsen later declared:

Personally, I sat there in blank bewilderment. I did not know what she referred to. I had neither heard nor had any knowledge of the things that she presented, nor of such a meeting as she described. Indeed, I was so surprised, and the things she presented as having taken

place in that meeting seemed so unreasonable, that I was quite nonplused in my mind as to what this meant. She spoke at considerable length, and placed the matter very definitely before us, and showed up the wrong spirit that was manifested, and the erroneousness of the position that had been taken by certain ones in their discussion....

Sister White had had no opportunity to have any knowledge of what had gone on in that room during the night in the Review office.... The Lord had shown it to her before the thing took place; and now, the very morning in which it took place, she had been, in a special manner, called by the Lord to present what had been shown her. It is needless to say not only that it brought relief to many minds, but that it gave cause for great thankfulness that at such a critical moment the Lord stepped in and saved us from the perplexity and confusion that seemed to be coming up on important questions.— *Ibid.*

An Abundance of Testimony

[482] The files of the White Estate hold the testimony of others who were present that Sunday morning. One such statement signed by six prominent ministers declares:

The relation of this vision made a profound and solemn impression upon that large congregation of Seventh-day Adventist ministers present at that early-morning meeting. When they heard those who had been reproved for the wrong course taken in that council confess that all Mrs. White had said about them was true in every particular, they saw the seal of divine inspiration had been set upon that vision and testimony. The power and solemnity of that meeting made an impression upon the minds of those present not soon to be forgotten.—DF 107b, joint statements.

The Experience Brought Unity

A. T. Robinson related that those who attended that morning meeting had no breakfast that day:

The meeting, which began at five-thirty and usually closed at six-thirty, continued until well on in the forenoon. It was one of the most remarkable meetings that it has ever been my privilege to attend. Men of strong iron wills, who the night before manifested a spirit of unyielding stubbornness, confessed with tears and brokenness of voice. Elder Dan Jones said, "Sister White, I thought I was right. Now I know I was wrong."

"The Holy Spirit witnessed to the testimony borne by His servant in that meeting, and instead of division, there came a spirit of unity and sweet communion. The *Sentinel*, now called *Liberty*, has continued to this day to bear a mighty message of truth to the people.—DF 107b, A. T. Robinson statement.

It was very clear to him why Sister White could not relate that vision to him and W. C. White in Salamanca, and why she was withheld from giving it as she attempted to do three times the day before. Not only was the cause of God spared from a serious mistake, but the experience provided unimpeachable evidence to not a few who, during the past two years, had entertained serious questions concerning the reliability and integrity of the Spirit of Prophecy. Coming as it did at the very opening of the conference session, it stabilized the work and put to rest those questioning elements that can be so devastating.

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General Conference Business

Developments early in the session pointed to the need of expanding educational facilities overseas, particularly in Australia. Haskell suggested that strength and inspiration would be brought to that field if Ellen White could spend some time there. Such thinking was not at all agreeable to her, for she hoped that she could soon find some quiet place and get on with her work on the life of Christ.

Official action taken at the session called for establishing a school in Australia but said nothing about an E. G. White visit. So she tried to put that matter out of her mind and proceed with plans for her work as if there would be no interruption.

Uriah Smith's Spirit of Prophecy Sermon

The second Sabbath of the session, Uriah Smith gave the morning worship sermon. His topic was "The Spirit of Prophecy and Our Relation to It." Choosing as his main text [1 Corinthians 12:1](#), "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant," he used scripture after scripture in presenting a strong Biblical basis for the position that the prophetic gift would appear in earth's last days. He climaxed this phase of his address by introducing [Revelation 12:17](#) as justification for accepting the position for this "operation of the Spirit" to be expected. He explained:

"The woman" is a symbol of the church, and the seed of the woman is the number of believers in any generation, and "the remnant of her seed" means, of course, the last generation of the church. Here is a positive prophecy that the last church will be characterized by this special feature; they will have the testimony of Jesus Christ. But what is the testimony of Jesus Christ? [Revelation 19:10](#): "For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."—[The General Conference Bulletin, 1891, 150](#).

After dealing with the various interpretations of this term, he carried his listeners to what might be called "the bottom line."

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Well, says one, if you have reached the fulfillment of this prophecy, which demands the testimony of Jesus Christ, or the spirit of prophecy in its midst, where is the Spirit of prophecy? I am speaking to a people today most, if not all, of whom know very well where it is, and how it is connected with this work.

It is set forth in what is known in our literature as the *Testimonies for the Church, The Spirit of Prophecy*,

The Great Controversy, and works of that nature. What is our relation to this? Our relation to it is our relation to something which arose with this work, which has gone right forward with it, side by side, which has interwoven itself into and through it and all about it, from the day this message began until this present hour.—[Ibid.](#), 151

Smith then traced some history from the very laying of the foundations of the church and read a question received in the mail just two days before:

Does the Seventh-day Adventist Church believe the so-called testimonies and writings of Mrs. E. G. White to be revelations from God?

We believe these writings are a manifestation of the Spirit of prophecy; and just as much as anything that comes from God's Spirit would be a "revelation from God," just so much these are a revelation from God.—[Ibid.](#)

Bringing his address to a close, he summed up his presentation in twelve numbered points, the last of which drove the matter home:

What is received through this gift should be accepted, cherished, and obeyed, if we would be prepared for a greater diversity in the operations of the Spirit, in the restoration of all the gifts, and for the larger outpouring of the Spirit upon the church, when it receives the refreshing ([Acts 3:19-21](#)), the early and the latter rain ([James 5:7, 8](#)), as it comes to the close of its experience and its work in this world, not far hence.—[The General Conference Bulletin](#), 153.

For two years Smith's influence had been negative; for two years he had said little about the Spirit of Prophecy as manifested in the life and work of Ellen White. But a few weeks before preaching this sermon, he had "fallen on the Rock," as Ellen White put it. Now everyone saw where he stood, and it brought strength and confidence to the people.

Ellen White Asks for Time

The *General Conference Bulletin* for Wednesday, March 18, carried an announcement that Ellen White had asked for time to address the conference. It read:

Thirteenth Meeting: As it has been previously announced that Sister White would occupy the time at ten-thirty, a very large audience was assembled at the time for the opening of the meeting. Prayer was offered by Elder A. T. Jones. After the reading of the minutes, the conference adjourned to 10:30 A.M., Wednesday, March 18.

Sister White bore a very earnest and impressive testimony, a synopsis of which will appear in a future number of the *Bulletin*.— *Ibid.*

The opening words of her address revealed the burden of her heart:

Dear Brethren and Sisters,

I have had a burden in regard to Battle Creek and the places surrounding it, and other places in Michigan. From time to time, light has been given me with reference to the duty of many of our people to leave this place, and go where they can spread the knowledge of the truth. Testimony on this point was given years ago, and why the people have been so backward in heeding it has been a mystery to me.—*Ibid.*, 181.

She then read from what she wrote after the vision given June 12, 1868, as recorded in *Testimonies*, volume 2, pages 113-116, presenting a strong appeal to Seventh-day Adventists who were not needed in Battle Creek to move to other regions and carry the message of the church with them. She appealed that for the good of the church members and for the spreading of the message, Battle Creek members should spread out.

manifested among us, I wonder if our people believe that Christ is soon coming. *Do you believe it?* A man will act out all the faith he has. We used to say so in 1843 and 1844. Brethren, do you now believe that the Lord is coming? Do you believe it in your hearts, or is it a mere theory, without any real faith or power?

The world will present its proposals to draw you away from the work, and Satan will tempt you to accept them. If you can be easily divorced from the work, you may depend upon it, the bribe will come, because Satan wants every soul that he can lead. Now, brethren and sisters, we want to know who are on the sacrificing side; we want to know who will be on the side of God, the side of heaven, the side of eternal life.—[Ibid.](#), 184.

The Question of Consolidation

In his opening address to the conference Olsen had mentioned the importance of the publishing work of the church and of steps being taken thought to strengthen it:

At the time of our last General Conference we recommended this subject as worthy of consideration by this body. The result was the appointment of a representative committee of twenty-one, to take the matter under advisement, learn what could be done, and if the way was open, to go on and effect such consolidation. This committee has done all that circumstances would permit, and will render its report to this body at the proper time.—[Ibid.](#), 9

This report came in to the session on Sunday morning, March 15. The editor of the *Bulletin* saw in the prompt and full attendance at the meeting, and the fact that many visitors were present, the interest taken in this particular item of business. The report opened:

Your committee appointed at the last session of this conference to take into consideration the consolidation of the publishing work under one general management,

with power to act, if in their judgment they thought best to do so, would report that we have given the matter referred to us much thought.—*Ibid.*, 123

[487] Instead of the formation of a new corporation, the committee recommended that the General Conference Association, which dealt with legal matters, be reorganized. The number of trustees should be increased from five to twenty-one, and all publishing interests should be consolidated under the control of this enlarged corporation board. It was suggested that if the conference acted promptly, the new arrangement could be set up before the close of the session, set for March 25. The recommendation was accepted and followed, and by the time the session closed, a board of twenty-one had been elected and steps taken to place it in a position of responsibility. What was not realized at the time was that the General Conference Association board of twenty-one could soon overpower, in some respects, the General Conference Committee of nine.

Among the many matters opened up to Ellen White in the Salamanca vision were dangers relating to the forming of confederacies in the publishing work, as brought to view in *Life Sketches*, chapter 48, [A reprinting of a tract issued in the early 1890S.] and the danger of covering up the distinctive features of the message, as referred to in chapter 35. She wrote of the vision given at Salamanca:

I was taken out of and away from myself to assemblies in different States, where I bore decided testimony of reproof and warning. In Battle Creek a council of ministers and responsible men from the publishing house and other institutions was convened, and I heard those assembled, in no gentle spirit, advance sentiments and urge measures for adoption that filled me with apprehension and distress.

Years before, I had been called to pass through a similar experience.... On the night of November 3, these warnings were brought to my mind, and I was commanded to present them before those in responsible offices of truth, and to fail not nor be discouraged. There

were laid out before me some things which I could not comprehend.—[Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 319.](#)

Her attention was called particularly to those carrying on the work at Battle Creek. She wrote:

Great peril was about the people, but some knew it not. Unbelief and impenitence blinded their eyes, and they trusted to human wisdom in the guidance of the most important interests of the cause of God relating to the publishing work. In the weakness of human judgment, men were gathering into their finite hands the lines of control, while God's will, God's way and counsel, were not sought as indispensable. Men of stubborn, iron-like will, both in and out of the office, were confederating together, determined to drive certain measures through in accordance with their own judgment.—[Ibid., 320, 321.](#)

[488]

Was it because she detected that this was taking place in the moves toward consolidating the publishing interests of the denomination that she was led to say what she did as she addressed the conference session on the last night of the meeting?

In this address she sounded warnings in several directions. Although she did not speak directly against the plans developed for the consolidation of the publishing work, it would seem that she had this in mind in her opening remarks:

Brethren and sisters, I appeal to you as Seventh-day Adventists to be all that this name signifies. There is danger of departing from the spirit of the message, and adopting measures that will imperil the work of God. As the Lord has presented these things before me at several times and in different places, I have been brought into your assemblies where articles were read and statements made which were false in principle and dangerous in their tendency. I was shown that those who advocated these sentiments were not following the

counsel of God.—[The General Conference Bulletin, 1891, 256.](#)

Among leading workers in her audience there was some uncertainty as to how to apply the counsel. Did it refer to problems over the *American Sentinel*, or to the matter of consolidation? When they came and inquired of her, she replied that she could not answer that question. At times under similar circumstances she replied: “I cannot explain it; you should understand it better than I. If you do not understand it, pray to the Lord, and He will help you.”—DF 105b, W. C. White address, November 25, 1905.

[489] In the closing meeting she devoted some time to the question of their relationship to the Spirit of Prophecy; she challenged them to test her work by the Word and by their observations. She spoke of the Sabbath and the need to prize it and stand in its defense, and that the church’s testimony now “is not to be less decided than formerly; our real position is not to be cloaked in order to please the world’s great men.”—[Ibid., 1891, 258](#)

She spoke of the institutions in Battle Creek and of how, as they were founded, the pioneers prayed and sought God day and night. “Now let us continue to pray,” she admonished. “If we needed to pray about the establishment of these institutions, how much more do we need to pray for God to keep them as guardians of the truth.”—[Ibid., 261.](#)

Cheering, Positive Attitudes

In closing, she first reminisced and then admonished:

At the morning meetings I have enjoyed hearing the testimonies of those who came here to learn—testimonies of how they have learned to believe that Christ has forgiven their sins.... If we learn what is to be the joy of our calling, we shall praise God with heart and soul and voice. And at last we shall have a glorious triumph when our captivity shall be turned, and our mourning and tears shall be forever past. What a shout of praise will then go forth from human lips! Shall we begin it here? God grant that we may!—[Ibid.](#)

A few days before the close of the session, Ellen White had written to fellow workers on the Pacific Coast:

We have had a deeply interesting conference.... I attended all the morning meetings except three, and spoke to the ministers with great freedom. The Lord has been in our midst, and we have seen of His salvation.

I never attended a General Conference where there was manifested as much of the Spirit of the Lord in the study of His Word, as on this occasion. Meeting after meeting was held for three weeks. Each morning there was a meeting at half past five for the ministers, and these were special seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. These ministers' meetings were of a solemn character. There was depth of feeling, thanksgiving and praise, offered to God for His precious blessing bestowed in the searching of His Word.—[Letter 3, 1891](#).

[490]

Ellen G. White Following the Session

The 1891 General Conference session over, Ellen White hoped fervently that there would be no invitation for her to go to Australia. She exclaimed, "I long for rest, for quietude and to get out the 'Life of Christ.'"—MS 29 1891. In fact, in anticipation of a concerted program of writing, she had purchased a lot in Petoskey, in the resort area on Lake Michigan, where she had spent two months the summer before. She was having a home built there, where she and her staff could hide away and work. But meetings the brethren wished her to attend would involve several weeks. The last of these were at Grand Rapids, which she would attend en route to Petoskey. In her restlessness she wrote:

I long to be in Petoskey and feel almost conscience-smitten in losing so much time. I do not know but that we will give up Grand Rapids and go on to Petoskey.—[Letter 65, 1891](#).

But she didn't, and finally she reached Petoskey on the evening of Monday, May 4. She stayed with friends for a few days until

her home was completed and her household goods had arrived from Battle Creek ([The Review and Herald, June 9, 1891](#)).

Her summer plans were to be affected by other actions taken at the recent General Conference session. One called for a Bible institute, to be followed by a summer normal institute from July 15 to August 25, in the vicinity of Petoskey. For some reason, perhaps because of her son's involvement, Ellen White and the two women with her, Sara McEnterfer and Marian Davis, were drawn into searching for appropriate sites for the planned summer institutes, even before getting settled in the new home, which was nearly ready for occupancy.

It was just at this point the invitation from the Foreign Mission Board for her to go to Australia reached her.

Ellen White Shared in Carriage Accident

[491] After W. C. White reached Petoskey he spent several days driving in different directions from the city in search of a location for the summer Bible school. It was while he was thus engaged that an accident occurred. George B. Starr and his wife, engaged in evangelism in that area, witnessed it at close range and felt it was an attempt on the part of the enemy to bring injury to Ellen White or to destroy her and those with her ([Ibid.](#)). She herself wrote of it to her close friend Dr. J. H. Kellogg, of the Battle Creek Sanitarium:

Wednesday we had an accident that might have proved quite serious. We had just started for Harbor Springs; before we were out of town, we turned a corner at a moderate pace, when one wheel of the carriage broke down completely. Every spoke came out of the hub, the carriage was overturned, throwing some of us out, and one on top of the other.

Willie was holding the reins. Our spirited horse had one thill [carriage shaft] on the top of her back; she trembled, but did not run a step. There was no screaming; we kept perfectly silent, but there was some surprised thinking. I crawled out over the back seat on hands and knees, and with heart and voice thanked the

Lord for our escape. No bones were broken and none of us was seriously hurt. The girls [Sara McEnterfer and Marian Davis] who were with us received some bruises, [but] I not a scratch, though my dress was badly torn.

The thill was taken from the horse's back, the tugs loosened, and the horse tied to the fence; we obtained another carriage from the livery stable and went on our way.—[Letter 10, 1891](#).

As they drove along, Ellen White had some thoughts about the wheel that had collapsed under stress, and about the Seventh-day Adventist workman who had made it:

I felt sad to think who made our carriage, and that the article we had thought could be depended upon was so wrecked. At first we could not understand the cause of the breakage, but upon examining the wheel [we] found that the spokes were too small for the holes in the hub, and wooden wedges had been driven in to make the spokes fit, then all painted over. It was a complete fraud. I am sorry that even all our brethren cannot be trusted to deal honorably, without pretense or fraud.

I believe that an angel of God stood by us to preserve our lives. When our horse was taken out of the stable she was so full of life that it was all a man could do to hold her. That in so short a time she could stand such a test so well was due to the guardianship of heavenly angels.—[Ibid.](#)

[492]

To Go or Not To Go

The action of the Foreign Mission Board calling for Ellen White to go to Australia carried a clause that left the final decision with her. That is, the request was predicated on “the light she may have in the matter” and “her own judgment” ([The General Conference Bulletin, 1891, 256](#)). As the summer wore on, how she sought the Lord for light! But she received none, either to go or not to go. On June 5 she wrote in her diary:

Up to this time I have had many letters to write. I have devoted most of four days to writing on the life of Christ. So many important letters to answer, which I cannot neglect, give me limited time to do the work I desire to do.—[Manuscript 43, 1891](#).

Nonetheless, the plans stood firm. As she later wrote of it, she had adopted the practice of responding to the requests of the General Conference unless she had special light to the contrary ([Letter 18a, 1892](#)). As they viewed the needs of the world field the brethren had asked her to go; in vision she had been shown conditions in Australia, which to her seemed to be an indication that she should go; and as the Lord gave her no direct word as to the course she should follow, she would go, even though she wished she might be released from going.

In mid-August the Foreign Mission Board and the General Conference Committee took action appointing the Starrs to accompany Ellen White and her party to Australia ([The Review and Herald, October 13, 1891](#)). *The Review and Herald* carried the word:

Sister White left Battle Creek, Wednesday September 9, in company with Brother W. C. White, and others, on her Western journey. She will attend the camp meeting in Colorado and California, and then sail for Australia.—[Ibid., September 15, 1891](#)

She had filled out nearly 63 years of her life. For nine years she would again labor overseas.

The Weight of Evidence

By Uriah Smith

Considerable handle, I understand, is being made in some directions—of the fact that the editor of the *Review* has been troubled over the question of the visions, has been unsound on that question, and at one time came very near giving them up. It strikes me that this is quite a small amount of capital to work up much of a trade on—“came very near giving them up”—but didn’t! I also, at one time, came very near getting run over by the cars, and rolled into jelly; but I didn’t, and so continue to this day. Some have met just such a catastrophe. The difference between them and myself is that they did, and I didn’t. Some have given up the visions. The difference between them and myself is the same—they did, and I didn’t.

Just how near I ever did come to giving them up, I am willing anyone should know who wishes to know, if it can be determined. Perhaps I have not come so near as some suppose; perhaps not so near as I have supposed myself. That I have had, in my experience, occasional periods of trial, I do not deny. There have been times when circumstances seemed very perplexing; when the way to harmonize apparently conflicting views did not at once appear. And under what have seemed, for the time, strong provocations to withdraw from the work, I have canvassed the question how far this could reasonably be done, or how much of this work could consistently be surrendered. I have pondered the questions whether this point was not inconsistent, or that absurd, or the other out of harmony with reason and revelation; and whether this feature ought not to be readjusted, or the other set aside entirely. All this ground I have gone over as thoroughly as anyone of no more ability than myself could go, and as candidly as anyone in as much darkness as I was in

would be likely to maintain. But the weight of evidence has never in my mind balanced on the side of surrender.

This I can say, that never, since I became fully acquainted with that system which we denominate “the present truth,” so as to comprehend it in its sublime proportions, its divine harmony, and its inseparable connections, have I had the least shadow of misgiving as to its truthfulness in its fundamental principles, and its stability and final triumph, as the work of God. It is evident, also, that this work before its close must present the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel, and some prophecies of the book of revelation. And to whatever degree I may have persuaded myself that this cause might have been so far developed without this feature which we call the gift of prophecy, it was only to look for something of the kind to appear in the future; for without this, it would lack one of the tests of being the work of the last generation.

This was not the phase of the question, however, with which we had to deal. For here was a manifestation which had been interwoven with this cause from its very commencement; and the idea of separating this feature from it now, in the present stage of the work, is very different from the question of how things might have been if no such feature had yet been connected with it. A little reflection is sufficient to show that the message, and this which purports to be one of the gifts of the spirit which has accompanied it, cannot be separated.

Well, then, says one, the absurdity of this part of the work is sufficient to overthrow the other. To which I reply, no; for the strength of the other part is sufficient to hold a person from giving up this. And this has been the position I have occupied. And so whatever doubts and perplexities I have had, I have in reality come just as near giving up the visions as I have of surrendering other parts of the message from which this could not be separated, and respecting which I have never had a misgiving.

[495] It has never seemed to me the part of wisdom to fix the mind upon any one point to the exclusion of all the rest, and let a difficulty there distract the view from everything else, and override every other consideration, and then because everything was not clear right at that point, to make an impulsive and rash plunge which would lead to the surrender of other points which one did not anticipate, and which

he did not desire to surrender. It has seemed to me the better way to consider the question in all its bearings, note the effects which would be produced, take in the consequences, and not make a move till one was prepared to accept the results which it was foreseen would probably or inevitably follow. Upon this principle I have tried to act. And I have never seen the time when I was willing to accept the results of a denial of the position and calling of sister White in connection with this cause, and hence have never seen the time when I have said by word of mouth, or come to a decision in my own heart, that her visions were not the operation of the spirit of God.

Of admonitions and reproofs I have needed my full share; and whenever anything of this nature has come which I could not understand, or circumstances have arisen which seemed inexplicable, I have been content to wait, knowing that the foundation of God standeth sure, to see what solution of the difficulties a little time would accomplish. The beautiful sentiment of the hymn has often come to my mind both as a caution and a prophecy:

“Soon shall our doubts and fears all yield to thy control;

“Thy tender mercies shall illumine the midnight of the soul.”

A general in battle does not despair of his army while the center stands firm. The wings may waver; there may be some confusion on the outskirts; but while the center holds, the battle is not lost. So with the present truth; so long as the main pillars remain unshaken, it is folly to leave the building as if it was about to fall.

Some of our brethren, I understand, who do not endorse the visions, knowing that I have questioned the arguments based on some scriptures in their behalf (only one or two, however), have thought me hypocritical because I did not come out and controvert in the *Review* what I considered the wrong application. The answer, in general, will be found in the principles stated above. I wish to see how a question is to be settled as a whole, before entering upon an aimless agitation of any of its parts, or an effort to sow doubt or distrust thereon. If the time should ever come when I

could not sincerely and joyfully entertain and seek to maintain the views of this people, and I should chance then to have a position upon the paper, their proper representatives would be notified at once to seek someone to manage their organ who could do so in harmony with their views. And if anyone supposes that I would, under these circumstances, take advantage of my position to publish views contrary to the established faith of the body, or calculated to throw doubt or confusion upon any of their cherished points of faith, they greatly mistake my estimate of what would be honest or honorable. Whatever I should have to say in that direction would be said only by the permission of those authorized to grant it, or through some channel provided for the purpose.

Relative to my present position, I can say that everything seems clear and satisfactory to my own mind. I do not know that I could make it appear so to others, though I should be willing to try under proper circumstances; but my convictions, so far as my own case is concerned, are of course sufficient. I do not anticipate any severer tests in time to come than have already been met and surmounted. Hence I consider myself now more firmly established than ever before in reference to every feature of this work. I do not, of course, presume to say what further experiences and discipline may be necessary to test the sincerity of my profession and the strength of my devotion to what I believe to be the cause of God. But my steps are onward with a firm trust for grace sufficient for my day, and for a way of escape on the right side of the slough of despond, out of every supposable period of temptation and trial.

The reader will pardon this lengthy, and to me distasteful, allusion to my own personal matters. I have made it for reasons stated at the beginning.—“Personal,” *Ibid.*, December, 1887.